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MEN & MANNERS

BY WILLIAM SHENSTONE: SELECTED AND INTRODUCED BY HAVELOCK ELLIS

'Every single observation that is published by a man of genius, be it ever so trivial, should be esteemed of importance; because he speaks from his own impressions; whereas common men publish common things, which they perhaps glean'd from frivolous writers.'

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INTRODUCTION

SHENSTONE is ranked among the minor figures in literature, even in eighteenth century English literature. Yet he has always been a significant figure for those who are able to see what signifies, and to-day his significance, not only for England but for Europe generally, continues to increase. In the *Cambridge History of English Literature*, where we may reasonably expect to find the standard literary opinion of our time, it is noteworthy that both Mr. Saintsbury, who deals with the minor poets of the eighteenth century, and Canon Hutton, who deals with the minor prose writers, alike independently refer to the undue neglect of Shenstone; 'a tendency at all times to treat him too lightly,' says the former, who adds, also taking his prose into consideration, that we may put Shenstone after Collins and Gray for 'the root of the matter'; while the latter states that Shenstone's prose has too long been neglected by lovers of good writing. As regards Shenstone's wider significance in the development of ideas in the modern world, that has been minutely studied of recent years by various writers in Germany and Switzerland and America, such as Dr. Mathilde Müller, Miss Hazeltine & Professor Hecht. This growth of interest in Shenstone is not merely due to that increased appreciation of the eighteenth century which marked the final disappearance of the nineteenth, it was already in progress in that century. For the interest of Shenstone is many-sided. While he was a child of his own age and carried certain of its lesser activities to the finest point, he was also the

pioneer of a coming age; in various directions he felt and thought what people in general only began to feel and think some fifty years later. That leads us to his third and fundamental aspect: he was an original personality who had developed a temperament of his own. Such a man attracts the devotion of his friends but usually the uncomprehending antipathy of those at a distance. It was so with Shenstone. He lived in the country, far from London. He cherished his friends, some of them men of considerable distinction; the nearest and dearest was Richard Graves, perhaps the most notable of them all, & to him we owe much of our knowledge of Shenstone.*

William Shenstone belonged to the middle of his century, being born in 1714 and dying in 1763, and to the central part of England at the point where Shropshire meets Worcestershire and Staffordshire. His family, it has been shown, was settled at Halesowen at least as far back as Queen Elizabeth's time, and his father was a plain country gentleman. Shenstone speaks of himself as having been born at the ancestral home, but nowadays we often know more about people than they knew about themselves, and it appears that he was born at Wigstone in Leicestershire, where, however, he was not baptised. This may indicate that he was born prematurely during a brief absence of his mother from home. That would be a significant fact as bearing on what seems to have been his constitutional tendency to ill health, notwithstanding a healthy country life; it is to be noted that the earliest dated poem he finally included in his

* I have elsewhere (*Nineteenth Century*, April 1915) written of Graves and his *Spiritual Quixote*, one of the most interesting and amusing novels of the eighteenth century, lately reprinted for the first time after more than a century.

work, dated 1730 at the age of sixteen (doubtless revised later), is an 'Ode to Health' in which he mourns its flight, while several other poems are concerned with illness. Both his parents, moreover, died when he was quite young, while his younger & only brother died in early manhood, so that the heredity may not have been sound. His mother belonged to the Penns of Harborough near Hagley, an ancient family, and from her came the estate which brought her son some £300 a year. He was educated at a Birmingham school to which the gentry of the neighbourhood sent their sons, and then entered at Pembroke College, Oxford. This was the college of Johnson, who later claimed Shenstone for Pembroke with satisfaction: 'Sir, we are a nest of singing birds.' Johnson & he do not seem to have associated, though they occasionally corresponded in later life, but it was here in 1732 that Shenstone learnt to know Richard Graves.* They were both occasionally to be found in a set which spent the evening in drinking ale & smoking tobacco, usually beginning these 'pious orgies' with the catch:

'Let's be jovial, fill our glasses,
Madness 'tis for us to think
How the world is ruled by asses,
And the wisest swayed by chink.'

But Shenstone was not altogether in his element in that set, nor indeed in the sets of a more sober and dreary character. He followed the regular courses

* In 1788 Graves published anonymously his *Recollections of some Particulars in the Life of the late William Shenstone*, the most interesting and intimate account of Shenstone we have, though not at every point completely accurate. Graves also wrote of Shenstone's home in the *Spiritual Quixote*, & another novel, *Columella*, is supposed to be partly suggested by Shenstone's character.

with zeal and profit, and for the rest enjoyed the society of two or three special friends (mostly, like Graves, to prove friends for life) who would meet for breakfast to discuss literature and humour while they sipped Florence wine. On the whole he sought few friends, being bashful & always remaining rather unsociable. In his dress he was unconventional, hating wigs & wearing his own hair naturally, 'almost in the graceful manner which has since prevailed,' a pioneer in this as in more important matters. But he was a large and rather awkward person and his hair inclined to be coarse, so that in following the rule he had laid down that, without a slavish regard to fashion, 'every one should dress in a manner most suitable to his own person and figure' (as his friend and publisher Dodsley puts it), he sometimes incurred a little ridicule at Oxford. He had been intended for the Church, but quickly renounced that project, and never joined any particular religious sect, just as he never associated himself with any political party; he was not hostile as regards these matters, but often humorous, and sometimes (when we look below the surface) rather critical. He left the University without taking a degree because on coming of age the family estate passed into his hands and he rather prematurely began to keep house, where what was regarded as his 'indolent temper' induced him to linger—at that time reading much French literature—though he kept his name on the College books. At the age of twenty-two, when away on a visit to Mickleton, he fell in love, possibly with a lady of the Graves family, a girl of great beauty, we are told, and 'mild and serene graces.' This passion held him for several years.

Meanwhile he gradually became absorbed in the cultivation of that combined rural and literary existence

which was to make his little estate, his *ferme ornée*, as he called it, The Leasowes, widely famous, and to occupy all his life. Fate was kind in enabling him to follow the vocation to which he was clearly called. It is true that he often complained of the idleness of his life, of his loneliness, of his lack of money and of health, of his melancholy, but it is certain that notwithstanding his indolence—of which he sometimes made a virtue—he found abundance alike of employment and happiness in his life, and constant delight in the development of his estate, even apart from the fame it ultimately brought him. In the absence of an early home life he had had no training in social intercourse; he disdained formality and etiquette, he disliked dancing and card playing and the other social amusements of that age. He had no love at all for town life. He went on a first visit to London—one hundred miles in those days meant a three days' journey—when he was about twenty-six, & found much to interest and amuse him, but he never felt the least desire to settle there, and the question of going abroad never even seems to have arisen. He found ample scope for employment and enjoyment at The Leasowes in carrying out gradually the never-ending task of enlargement and improvement in accordance with those of his fertile ideas which his small income permitted, for, as he wrote to his friend Jago, 'Economy, that invidious old matron, on occasion of every frivolous expense, makes such a hideous squalling that the murmur of a cascade is utterly lost to me.' Still the cascade was no doubt eventually made with the help of his man Tom, while he could not always resist the temptation to buy what he called 'toys,' especially snuff-boxes. He painted in water colours (chiefly flower pieces), with some skill it is said, and was fond

of music; he played the harpsichord, sang with much expression, and always regarded music, he said, as his 'dernier resort.' He was too considerate, as well as too lazy, to worry his tenants when in arrears with their rents, & he seems always on the point of plunging hopelessly into debt, yet for all his seeming carelessness he kept within his income of £300, left no debts at his death, and so improved his little estate that (his friend Bishop Percy stated) it was sold by auction in 1795 for £17,000. Dr. Müller compares the fame of The Leasowes to that of Abbotsford half a century later, but, while they may be comparable in reputation, in character they were totally unlike; Abbotsford was the monument of Scott's enthusiastic devotion to the past, while The Leasowes attracted attention because it was so 'modern' and seemed a revelation of the possibilities of the future.

Shenstone's complaints of the emptiness of his life, we can now see, were the outcome of his constitution; his 'natural melancholy,' like his indolence, was the mark of a native lack of energy, despite a large and seemingly robust frame. We can detect no definite chronic disease; he complains most of his digestion; it is unnecessary here to go into all the symptoms (the epitaphic 'Inscription', which is the most amusingly indecorous of the section of his verse entitled 'Levities,' was probably written of himself), but it is evident that powdered rhubarb (with a little grated nutmeg) was not always an adequate treatment; nor even visits to Bath to take the waters, in which he had much faith. We hear of sleeplessness, headaches, little nervous symptoms; and it is evident that his housekeeper, Mrs. Arnold—of whom we catch glimpses in the Letters & would gladly have more—sometimes had trying experiences, but his dependents, like his friends, clung

to him and their devotion bears witness to the consideration for others which those who knew him noted as marking all his relationships in life. 'Tenderness, in every sense of the word, was his peculiar characteristic,' wrote Dodsley, who thought he carried it to excess. 'I cannot be half a friend,' he said himself. Graves, who thought he was a little too fond of raillery, notes how careful he was to stop when there was any risk of hurting.

With this disposition, and a horror of loneliness, he never married. To the modern literary critic the emotions of love he expressed in his verse seem an affectation. That is not so. His poems are, for the most part, as he said himself, 'the exact transcripts of the situation of his own mind'; had he been a man of affectations he would scarcely remain of much interest to us to-day. We know from the statements of his close friend Graves that after the early attraction had faded out, at the age of twenty-nine, he met at Cheltenham and became intimate with a young lady of superior social rank to his own, who eventually outlived him; he was much enamoured but he never seems to have made love to her. His emotions were sublimated in the 'Pastoral Ballad,' which was long a favourite poem among youthful readers and remains one of his most admired productions. We may easily divine that, in his deliberative way, Shenstone came to the conclusion that with his defective health and vigour, his love of informal ease, his inadequate income, he was hardly fitted for the arduous vocation of marriage. 'It is a part of philosophy,' he wrote of himself to a friend, 'to adapt one's passions to one's way of life'. But he always had a sensitive perception of the graces of women, and one notes, for instance, alike in his letters and his poems, how he appre-

ciated a natural wearing of hair in his lady friends,—

'So pleased I view thy shining hair,
In loose dishevelled ringlets flow.'

When we come to Shenstone's relation to what is 'natural' we are at the root of the question of his historical significance. To the literary critic of to-day, not burdened with much historic sense, Shenstone usually seems just a pseudo-classic eighteenth century writer exploiting the conventions of his time, merely, in the words of one of his modern critics, 'the best of English poets in the Dresden China kind.' Similarly, as regards a yet more significant figure of the previous century, the mere literary critic is quick to see in Cowley his insipidities and his incongruities; he is blind to the new roads which Cowley opened, to liberate and enchant his contemporaries, simply because they are now so well trodden that the simple-minded critic takes them for granted. Thus it is that, when we look at Shenstone through the atmosphere created by the great romantics, he seems lost in faded elegancies. To see what he means we must view him from the other side and we must know how he looked to his contemporaries. A rebel he certainly was not; he had neither the tough fibre of a Blake nor the sensitive reactions of a Shelley, which make the two types of rebel. He was too comprehensively humane and humourous for revolt, too temperamentally akin with the large harmonious spirit of Shaftesbury. But the same quality which led him to accept so much that was passing led him also to anticipate much that was coming. He was classic in fundamental taste. Yet even his favourite classic poet was the romantic Virgil, whose tender and melancholy music always haunted him, so that we often find it echoed in his own verse. '*All* the lines in

Virgil,' he wrote to Graves in 1755, 'afford me that Sort of Pleasure which one receives from melancholy Music.' The most favoured walk in his grounds he had named Virgil's Grove, and here he set up urns to those whom he desired to honour, adorning them with the epigrammatic Latin inscriptions in which he was endlessly fertile; one of these (that to his beloved cousin, Miss Dolman) so good a judge as Landor termed 'the most beautiful of epitaphs.' But Shenstone, who had taken up the *Faery Queen* to parody it, found as he wrote the *Schoolmistress* that he was learning to love Spenser. It was, moreover, Shenstone, it seems, who first suggested to his friend Percy to edit and bring out those old ballads which were to be the inspiration of the coming romantic age. ''Tis the voice of Sentiment rather than the language of Reflexion, adapted peculiarly to strike the Passions, which is the only Merit of Poetry that has obtained my regard of late,' he wrote to Percy in 1760, towards the end of his life. Love verses without passion, he declared elsewhere, are nauseous conceits, and no poetry is worth while 'that does not strongly affect one's passions.' It is characteristic of Shenstone and those of his English fellows who were then feeling their way towards Romanticism, while still lingering among the classics, as Mathilde Müller remarks, that, unlike the early French & German Romantics, their movement was unconscious, and so it is that these first buds have so fresh a charm, and, as Saintsbury says, 'a strange attraction.' 'I think most of my verses,' he himself once wrote to Lady Luxborough, 'smell of nothing but field flowers, & considering how I spend my time they can scarcely do otherwise.' Thus it is that Shenstone, in the middle of his century, incarnates a transition. With one hand he touches Prior and beyond

Prior points to the greater Spenser, and with the other he reaches towards Burns and even Wordsworth. We know what enthusiastic admiration Burns felt for Shenstone, especially for his elegies, his 'divine elegies', and how in moments of depression he envied his genius. In Burns the buds of Shenstone become flowers. The echoes of Shenstone—magnified as echoes will be—appear in the ballads and elegiac lyrics of Wordsworth, though Wordsworth was moving with firmer and more adventurous feet in the new world to which Shenstone had uncertainly pointed.

The Leasowes was the physical embodiment of Shenstone's spiritual attitude of transition. When we read of the vistas he formed with such ingenious care, of the artificial waterfalls, of the inscribed urns to distinguished friends, such as James Thomson, who had visited him, all this seems inconsistent in the man, so reverent of Nature, who wrote of the stream in the valley

'Would art attempt, or fancy dream,
To regulate its winding way?'

But we have to remember that just as a modern critic (Saintsbury) has truly said that Shenstone's artificial pastoral was a stage in the return to real nature, so it was with his gardens. He was deliberately rejecting the formal geometrical gardens, with their fantastically carved trees, which his century had inherited from the seventeenth. He hated formality, in the garden as elsewhere, but in an age of artifice nature could only be introduced by cultivation and what Shenstone did was to substitute for the imitation of art, which had so long ruled in gardening, an imitation of Nature, which in its turn gave place to the anyhow methods of gardening that prevail to-day. In this return to Nature he was working, however independently, in

the same direction as the great professional landscape gardeners of the English school in his century, as William Kent and Launcelot Brown and Humphrey Repton. Years after his death The Leasowes still seemed to be laid out as finely as anything in the 'modern' taste that had yet been done, and Isaac D'Israeli felt able to say that it was Shenstone who had educated the nation into 'that taste for landscape gardening which has become the model for all Europe.' We are aided to realise Shenstone's position if we observe the attitude towards him of the two most typical men of his time, who, however unlike each other, yet together best represented the spirit of their age, Dr. Johnson & Horace Walpole. They were neither of them actually hostile to Shenstone, yet both stood aloof and both failed to like him, as indeed they could not but also fail to like each other. ('Good-natured at bottom,' said Walpole of Johnson, 'but very ill-natured at top.') Although Johnson was favourably disposed to Shenstone as being of the same college, his references to him were of a grudging and slighting character, even ten years after his death. 'A good layer out of land,' he said (not that he thought much of that), 'but with no excellence as a poet,' and he would not even agree with Boswell's appreciation of his prose. Boswell, whose perceptions were more sensitive, writes: 'My illustrious friend, I thought, did not sufficiently admire Shenstone.' Johnson's one tribute was that when staying at the inn at Henley-in-Arden where Shenstone had written the stanzas 'At an Inn,' he repeated, 'with great emotion,' the last verse:—

'Who'er has travelled life's dull round,
Where'er his stages may have been,
May sigh to think he still has found
The warmest welcome at an inn;'

but that appreciation was due to Johnson's own declared belief that 'a tavern chair is the throne of human felicity.' Moreover it was a little touch of boorishness that had brought Shenstone to that inn and led to the poem; he had gone to visit his old friend Whistler, in whose house he never felt quite at home, when a little tiff occurred between the friends, and Shenstone went off to the inn in a huff. But so colossal a boor as Johnson could not but feel contempt for Shenstone's little excursions in that field. Shenstone had much admiration for the nervous qualities of Johnson's prose at its best, but Johnson, to whom even Milton's mighty sonnets seemed petty, was necessarily blind alike to the delicacies and the simplicities of Shenstone's verse; for him Shenstone must have seemed to be absorbed in trivialities. That might have endeared him to Horace Walpole, the supreme master of the trivial; indeed on one occasion Walpole mentions how he had been eagerly reading Shenstone's Letters, 'which though containing nothing but trifles amused me immensely.' No doubt he had there noted the remark that Mr. Walpole in his books 'with great labour recorded matters of little importance, relative to people that were of less.' But it is clear that there were not trifles enough in Shenstone to please Walpole entirely. Shenstone's Letters seldom touch on great events or great personages, but to-day they are full not only of trifles but of human interest and personal character. To Walpole Shenstone doubtless seemed provincial. Walpole, with all his taste for the fashionable shudders of an antiquarian Gothicism, was not only a man of the world, but a man of the wider world, a cosmopolitan, at home in France, the intimate correspondent of Madame du Deffand, the chief English representative of what to many seems the

spirit of the eighteenth century, though it was really only one aspect, however significant; for just as Croce finds that the thought of the nineteenth century has been realised in the twentieth, so, with more confidence, we may say that the seeds of all the mighty growths of the nineteenth century were sown in the eighteenth. Shenstone was not a man of the world and not a cosmopolitan; while interested in France he was English, though not, like Johnson, insularly English, and he was content to be English; his chief woman friend and correspondent, Lady Luxborough (who, indeed, sometimes 'indulged' Shenstone, he says, with a letter in French) was distinctly English. Yet he moved in a larger orbit than either the more brilliant Walpole or the more massive Johnson, if at times coming near to both, and they remained too close to their own age to follow his course.

Shenstone, not without his ambitions indeed, & often more lonely than he liked in the cheerless winters, was still certainly content to follow his own course at The Leasowes, even though, as he wrote to his friend Jago, 'the notable incidents of my life amount to about as much as the tinsel of your little boy's hobby-horse.' Here he wandered in his own groves—'Virgil's Grove' he often mentions—and along his own brooks. Here he fed his wild ducks & gathered his carnations, wrote down his reflections as they occurred to him, carefully indited his letters (he thought well of these and was sorry to hear that one series had been destroyed on the death of a friend), seldom failing to refer to the visits he is expecting from his friends or those he is planning to make. Much time was taken up by the constant little improvements made to the estate, and in between all were woven his poems. 'I have an alcove,' he wrote to Jago, 'six elegies, a seat, two epitaphs (one

upon myself), three ballads, four songs, and a serpentine river to show you when you come.' The visits of friends were always a festival for the often depressed and ailing poet. They found him, as described by Graves, a man a little heavy in appearance (clumsy, some said), with a face that became very pleasing when animated, and hair that had early turned grey, simply dressed (very negligently, others said), usually a plain blue coat in summer and winter alike, and a scarlet waistcoat with broad gold lace. We gather that he did not always get on well with acquaintances who were not of his inner circle. Amos Green, a now obscured artist who was a neighbour of Shenstone's, sometimes stayed with him, and in the *Memoir* by his wife we are told that 'his intercourse with Shenstone afforded him great pleasure: he said he was singularly agreeable when in spirits; but he was full of foibles and faults, and their friendship was not lasting.' But, though Shenstone speaks kindly of young Green, and thought highly of his work, we can scarcely admit a friendship. 'Foibles' Shenstone confesses to his friends, but with all who were really near to him the friendship was life-long. With Lady Luxborough, Bolingbroke's half-sister, his correspondence was close (a volume of her letters to him has been published) and lasted till her death. They frequently stayed at each other's houses; on one occasion we hear of her coming to his house with five servants, and horses to match, which must have taxed her host's modest hospitality. Lady Luxborough's marital life had not been flawless, and General Knight, a natural son of Lord Luxborough, is reported to have said that his father left his wife on account of her 'too great partiality' for Shenstone. She was no doubt a woman of independent spirit with tastes of her own, but we may

probably accept the view that Lord Luxborough, who notoriously 'roved from fair to fair,' merely desired a pretext to leave his wife; she was fifteen years older than Shenstone, and her letters give not the least indication of more than ordinary friendship with much community of tastes; she doubtless felt the attraction to a man of genius sometimes experienced by great ladies of cultivated mind, an attitude of slightly patronising worship. With the Lytteltons and other distinguished families in his neighbourhood Shenstone was in friendly relationship, while at the same time he was on good terms with his humbler neighbours. The Leasowes grounds seem to have been open to all, and on Sunday evenings he speaks of himself as sometimes moving among nearly a hundred and fifty people. He had set up two stanzas of verse in which he warned 'swains and nymphs' of the penalties which the fauns and fairies of the place would inflict on those who injured shrubs or picked flowers, remarking that, with the strong local belief in fairies, he trusted this warning would be effectual. We have hardly improved upon it to-day.

On one occasion he went to London, again lodging in Fleet Street. He found that neighbourhood and the Strand infested with pickpockets, who carried bludgeons with the object of first striking their victims to the ground, even as early as eight in the evening, and decided that he preferred the milder troubles at home. He never indeed cared to be away for more than a few days at a time. It was a severe blow to him when his only brother died in 1752, the greatest affliction that befell him (though we do not seem to hear of the brother when alive), and he writes to Graves at length and with touching simplicity of his grief. It seemed to him that he despised poetry and hated his

house. A few months later summer came and he was trying to forget his sorrow. He writes in July: 'I neither read nor write aught besides a few letters; and I give myself up entirely to scenes of dissipation, lounge at my lord Dudley's for near a week together; make dinners; accept of invitations, sit up till three o'clock in the morning with young sprightly married women, over white port and *vin de paysans*, ramble over my fields, issue out orders to my hay-makers; foretell rain and fair weather; enjoy the fragrance of hay, the cocks, and the wind-rows; admire that universal lawn which is produced by the scythe; sometimes inspect, and draw mouldings for my carpenters; sometimes paper my walls, & at other times my ceilings; do every social office that falls in my way, but never seek out for any.' But his gaiety was the mask of melancholy, and a touch of sadness comes at the end of this letter, as in many of the letters that follow. Yet to the end his letters, if not his life, were marked by his old vivacity and are full of his old interests, glancing off now and then to the literature of the day, Voltaire's latest play, Madame de Sévigné's Letters, *Sir Charles Grandison*, Burke on *The Sublime and Beautiful*, or the new Virgil from 'neighbour Baskerville's press.' In 1758 he went to Worcester to hear the *Messiah*—'it seems the best composer's best composition,' though he had his criticisms—but 'returned with double relish to the enjoyment of my farm.' Meanwhile his reputation was growing among men of letters, & the fame of The Leasowes spreading far. His spirits always rose in the season of flowers, but in the winter months, especially January, he usually suffered from depression of health and spirits. It was in January that he was attacked by his final illness. He died in February, 1763, of a 'putrid fever,' a term

which conveys no meaning to us but was then used not only for typhus but for various acute inflammatory complaints.

It is an advantage for a minor author to come down to posterity encumbered with but little baggage. Shenstone bears only three small volumes — poems, prose, letters—and they contain little that those who read them would desire to cast away. Herein Shenstone was well served by his constitutional indolence. He was too lazy to write except at such moments as he felt he had something to say. Yet he was anything but lazy in the care he bestowed on what he had thus written. He was eager for criticisms and suggestions from his friends, he frequently re-wrote, he was never tired of polishing. He rejected what he felt to be below his level, and took much trouble to suppress a little volume of poems he had published at the age of twenty-three. In the end, indeed, that has helped to limit the number of his readers, for the perfection of shape finally attained by his poems has hardly seemed of a degree to make up for the seeming lack of vivid original inspiration. In one of his later letters he defends this care in composition & argues that it should not obscure the mark of original inspiration. His arguments are sound. Yet it may be noted that 'At an Inn', which though but a trifle (he placed it among his 'Levities') has alone among his poems been styled 'famous', owes that quality to a sharp original inspiration which has survived the polishing, while in too many of his poems we enjoy the polish, but find the inspiration vague. 'One cannot deny', he himself admitted, 'that there is a sort of person formed by nature for *shooting-flying*, which I could never do.' At his best Shenstone is delicate or reflective, and with an echoing melancholy music, idyllic or elegiac:—

'Where with Œnone thou hast worn the day;
Near fount or stream, in meditation rove;
If in the grove Œnone loved to stray,
The faithful Muse shall meet thee in the grove.'

We need not doubt his original inspirations but they are too often obscured by the classic convention in which he clothes them, and the music for which he had so fine an ear hardly suffices to make up for that obscurity. Collins and Gray are counted as in the same movement as Shenstone; but it was their good fortune to come a little later, and those traditions of art which to Shenstone could still seem natural they began severely to cast away (although we have to remember that Shenstone was one of the few modern poets whom Gray unreservedly admired) and so to come closer to the real facts & appear before us to-day in a poetic rank to which we can never lift Shenstone. Shenstone's *Schoolmistress*, in which, first begun in early life as almost a parody, he united his feeling for the fairy romance of Spenser with a naturalistic love for things of the earth, Gray called 'masterly'. Hazlitt, living in an age of great poetry, had but a poor opinion of Shenstone, yet he calls the *Schoolmistress* 'a perfect piece of writing', while to-day, Dr. Harko de Maas, the historian of modern English romanticism, considers that poem 'for humourous tenderness and pathetic burlesque not easy to match.' But all the fine qualities of Shenstone in verse, it must be admitted, now make their chief appeal to the literary specialist and he is likely to over-rate them. Gosse is reminded by the *Pastoral Ballad* of Watteau. That is excessive. Shenstone was never a magician to create a new enchanting world of fairyland. If we must have comparisons of this kind (they are really to be condemned)

let us rather think of Lancret, who accepted the gracious traditions he had received, and developed them on a realistic earth with a skill which still appeals to those who can recognise it.

It is customary to regard Shenstone as a poet. But to-day it may be claimed that it is in his completely neglected prose that he is most generally interesting and most impressive. *Essays on Men & Manners*, the title which covers the whole of this prose, occupies the second volume of Shenstone's *Works*, published the year after his death. It consists of occasional essays, and many reflections jotted down as they occurred during the last twenty years of his life and arranged under headings according to subject. Dodsley, in introducing them, wrote: 'His character, as a man of clear judgment and deep penetration, will best appear from his prose works. It is there we must search for the acuteness of his understanding, and his profound knowledge of the human heart.' *Essays on Men and Manners* remained in the *Works* as long as they continued to be reprinted. Fifty years ago (in 1868) they were issued afresh in a series of miscellaneous books. But I have never been able to observe that they are ever read or quoted, or even referred to outside literary histories. There are perhaps at least two considerations which may help to account for this neglect. In the first place, of the two components of the volume, essays and fragments, it is the essays that are most conspicuous, but also the least notable. They are well and pleasantly written, like everything Shenstone wrote, sometimes of charming quality, though the phraseology may now and then seem antiquated; yet if to-day we smile at the adjective 'elegant' and find 'taste' too simple a name for the aesthetic appreciation almost amounting to genius Shenstone had in mind,

the substance of his writing is as much alive in our day as in his own. But Shenstone lived immediately after the great masters of the essay; it had been carried to perfection; at that moment there was no further progress to make; he could only do well what had already been done better. In the fragments Shenstone was alone in the field, and here he became really himself. But here also a supposed 'unfinished' character diverted attention. It was not realised that they are not really unfinished. No one recognised that Shenstone was a *pensée*-writer, & that his prose corresponds in English to the work of the great French writers in that kind.

This was not clear to Shenstone's contemporaries. For them his prose was merely fragments. *Ex pede Herculem*, they said, and they thought of the wonderful things he would have done if he had not been so lazy. They failed to understand either his indolence or its outcome. 'Did I never tell you (if not I do so now)', he wrote to a friend in 1754, 'that indolence will, in a thousand instances, give one all the advantages of philosophy? and pray, if you call me lazy any more, take care that you do not use an expression by way of disparagement which I consider as the highest honour. I am a fool, however, for discovering my secret.' Shenstone knew himself well enough to know that his 'laziness' was the expression of that kind and degree of energy which had been bestowed upon him; he was wise enough to accept it, and in so doing to transmute it into art and philosophy. His 'secret' was that he knew how to use his limited strength, to spend it on what was worth while, and to produce, in the end, little, it may be, but only his best.

That is a kind of disposition, it must be noted, that accounts for the form of expression of the great *pensée*-

writers generally. A writer of rich and vigorous temperament, a Goethe or a Bacon, may incidentally write *pensées*, they cannot be a chief outcome of his life. It is where there is only the energy for brief intellectual flights, the need for concentration, for hesitation, for deliberation, and the consequent demand for high finish, that the great writer of *pensées*, of maxims and of reflexions, is moulded. It may not be quite clear that the spiritual anaemia of La Rochefoucauld was the result of physical conditions and not of the unfortunate environment in which he moved, but we see clearly in Pascal the outcome of a morbid and suffering organism; we see it in the bitterness of Chamfort. I would especially like to invoke the instance of Vauvenargues, in whom we find not only the same courage towards life combined with physical delicacy, but a sweetness and tolerance and insight which bring him of all the great writers with whom he is grouped the nearest to Shenstone. It is time to realise that while the figures of first rank in this kind belong to France, we have in Shenstone a writer altogether English who is worthy to place among them, if not on the same level as the highest, yet in the same class.

HAVELOCK ELLIS.

MEN AND MANNERS

'TIS NOT UNAMUSING TO CONSIDER the several apologies that people make when they commence authors. It is taken for granted that, on every publication, there is at least a seeming violation of modesty; a presumption, on the writer's side, that he is able to instruct or to entertain the world; which implies a supposition that he can communicate, what they cannot draw from their own reflexions.

When the love of fame acts upon a man of genius, the case appears to stand thus. The generality of the world, distinguished by the name of readers, observe with a reluctance not unnatural, a person raising himself above them. All men have some desire of fame, and fame is grounded on comparison. Every one then is somewhat inclined to dispute his title to a superiority; and to disallow his pretensions upon the discovery of a flaw. Indeed, a fine writer, like a luminous body, may be beneficial to the person he enlightens; but it is plain, he renders the capacity of the other more discernible.—Examination, however, is a sort of turnpike in the way to fame, where, though a writer be a while detained, and part with a trifle from his pocket, he finds in return a more commodious and easy road to the temple.

When, therefore, a man is conscious of ability to serve his country, or believes himself possessed of it (for there is no previous test on this occasion) he has no room to hesitate, or need to make apology.—When self-interest inclines a man to print, he should consider that the purchaser expects a penny-worth for his penny: and has reason to asperse his honesty if he finds himself

deceived.—Also, that it is possible to publish a book of no value, which is too frequently the product of such mercenary people.—When fame is the principal object of our devotion, it should be considered whether our character is like to gain in point of wit, what it will probably lose in point of modesty: otherwise, we shall be censured of vanity more than famed for genius; and depress our character while we strive to raise it.

After all, there is a propensity in some to communicate their thoughts without any view at all: the more sanguine of these employ the press; the less lively are contented with being impertinent in conversation.

On the Test of Popular Opinion

I happen to fall into company with a citizen, a courtier, and an academic.

Says the citizen, I am told continually of taste, refinement, and politeness; but methinks the vulgar and illiterate generally approve the same productions with the connoisseurs. One rarely finds a landskip, a building, or a play, that has charms for the critic exclusive of the mechanic. But, on the other hand, one readily remarks students who labour to be dull, depraving their native relish by the very means they use to refine it. The vulgar may not indeed be capable of giving the reasons why a composition pleases them. That mechanical distinction they leave to the connoisseur. But they are at all times, methinks, judges of the beauty of an effect, a part of knowledge in most respects allowedly more genteel than that of the operator.

Says the courtier, I cannot answer for every individual instance: but I think, moderately speaking, the vulgar are generally in the wrong. If they happen to be otherwise, it is principally owing to their implicit reliance on the skill of their superiors: and this has sometimes been strangely effectual in making them imagine they relish perfection. In short, if ever they judge well, it is at the time they least presume to frame opinions for themselves.

It is true they will pretend to taste an object which they know their betters do. But then they consider some person's judgment as a certain standard or rule; they find the object exactly tally; and this demonstrated appearance of beauty affords them some small degree of satisfaction.

It is the same with regard to the appetite, from which the metaphor of taste is borrowed. 'Such a soup or ollio, say they, is much in vogue; and if you do not like it, you must learn to like it.'

But in poetry, for instance, it is urged that the vulgar discover the same beauties with the man of reading.

Now half or more of the beauties of poetry depend on metaphor or allusion, neither of which, by a mind uncultivated, can be applied to their proper counterparts. Their beauty, of consequence, is like a picture to a blind man.

How many of these peculiarities in poetry turn upon a knowledge of philosophy and history; and let me add, these latent beauties give the most delight to such as can unfold them.

I MIGHT launch out much farther in regard to the narrow limits of their apprehensions—What I have said may exclude their infallibility; and it is my opinion they are seldom right.

THE Academic spoke little, but to the purpose; asserting that all ranks and stations have their different spheres of judging: That a clown of native taste enough to relish Handel's Messiah, might unquestionably be so instructed as to relish it yet more: That an author, before he prints, should not flatter himself with a confused expectation of pleasing both the vulgar and the polite; few things, in comparison, being capable of doing both in any great degree: That he should always measure out his plan for the size of understanding he would fit. If he can content himself with the mob, he is pretty sure of numbers for a time. If he write with more abundant elegance, it may escape the organs of such readers; but he will have a chance for such applause as will more sensibly affect him. Let a writer then in his first performances neglect the idea of profit, & the vulgar's applause entirely: Let him address them to the judicious few, and then profit and the mob will follow. His first appearance on the stage of letters will engross the politer compliments; and his latter will partake of the irrational huzza.

On allowing MERIT in OTHERS

A CERTAIN gentleman was expressing himself as follows:

I CONFESS, I have no great taste for poetry; but, if I

had, I am apt to believe I should read no other poetry than that of Mr. Pope. The rest but barely arrive at a mediocrity in their art; and, to be sure, poetry of that stamp can afford but slender pleasure.

I KNOW not, says another, what may be the gentleman's motive to give this opinion: But I am persuaded, numbers pretend the same through mere jealousy or envy.

A READER considers an author, as one who lays claim to a superior genius. He is ever inclined to dispute it, because, if he happen to invalidate his title, he has at least one superior the less. Now though a man's absolute merit may not depend upon the inferiority of another, yet his comparative worth varies in regard to that of other people. Self-love, therefore, is ever attentive to pursue the single point of admitting no more into the class of superiors than it is impossible to exclude. Could it even limit the number to one, they would soon attempt to undermine him. Even Mr. Pope had been refused his honours, but that the very constraint, & even absurdity, of people's shutting their eyes grew as disagreeable to them, as that excellence, which, when open, they could not but discover.

BUT self-love obtains its wishes in another respect also. It hereby not only depresses the characters of many that have wrote, but stifles the genius of such as might hereafter rise from amongst our inferiors.

LET us not deny to Mr. Pope the praises which a person enamoured of poetry would bestow on one that excelled in it: But let us consider Parnassus rather as a republic than a monarchy; where, although some

may be in possession of a more cultivated spot, yet others may possess land as fruitful, upon equal cultivation.

On the whole, let us reflect, that the nature of the soil, and the extent of its fertility, must remain undiscovered, if the gentleman's desponding principle should meet with approbation.

Mr. Pope's chief excellence lies in what I would term consolidating or condensing sentences, yet preserving ease and perspicuity. In smoothness of verse, perhaps, he has been equalled: In regard to invention, excelled.

Add to this, if the writers of antiquity may be esteemed our truest models, Mr. Pope is much more witty, and less simple, than his own Horace appears in any of his writings. More witty, and less simple, than the modern Mons. Boileau, who claimed the merit of uniting the style of Juvenal and Persius with that of Horace.

Satyr gratifies self-love. This was one source of his popularity; and he seems even so very conscious of it as to stigmatise many inoffensive characters.

The circumstance of what is called alliteration, and the nice adjustment of the pause, have conspired to charm the present age, but have at the same time given his verses a very cloying peculiarity.

But, perhaps, we must not expect to trace the flow of Waller, the landskip of Thomson, the fire of Dryden, the imagery of Shakespear, the simplicity of Spencer, the courtliness of Prior, the humour of Swift, the wit of Cowley, the delicacy of Addison, the tenderness of

Otway, and the invention, the spirit and sublimity of Milton, joined in any single writer. The lovers of poetry, therefore, should allow some praise to those who shine in any branch of it, and only range them into classes according to that species in which they shine.

'Quare agite, O juvenes!'

Banish the self-debasing principle, and scorn the disingenuity of readers. Humility has depressed many a genius into an hermit; but never yet raised one into a poet of eminence.

An Humorist

NOT the entrance of a cathedral, not the sound of a passing bell, not the furs of a magistrate, nor the sables of a funeral, were fraught with half the solemnity of face!

Nay so wonderfully serious was he observed to be on all occasions, that it was found hardly possible to be otherwise in his company. He quashed the loudest tempest of laughter, whenever he entered the room; and men's features, though ever so much roughened, were sure to grow smooth at his approach.

The man had nothing vitious, or even ill-natured in his character; yet he was the dread of all jovial conversation; the young, the gay, found their spirits fly before him. Even the kitten and the puppy, as it were by instinct, would forego their frolics, and be still. The depression he occasioned was like that of a damp, or vitiated air. Unconscious of any apparent cause,

you found your spirits sink insensibly: And were any one to sit for the picture of ill-luck, it is not possible the painter could select a more proper person.

Yet he did not fail to boast of a superior share of reason, even for the want of that very faculty, risibility, with which it is supposed to be always joined.

Indeed he acquired the character of the most ingenious person of his country, from this meditative temper. Not that he had ever made any great discovery of his talents; but a few oracular declarations, joined with a common opinion that he was writing somewhat for posterity, compleated his reputation.

Numbers would have willingly depretiated his character, had not his known sobriety and reputed sense deterred them.

He was one day overheard at his devotions, returning his most sincere thanks for some particularities in his situation, which the generality of mankind would have but little regarded.

Accept, said he, the gratitude of thy most humble, yet most happy creature, not for silver or gold, the tinsel of mankind, but for those amiable peculiarities which thou hast so graciously interwoven both with my fortune and my complexion: For those treasures so well adapted to that frame of mind thou hast assigned me.

That the surname which has descended to me is liable to no pun.

THAT it runs chiefly upon vowels and liquids.

THAT I have a picturesque countenance, rather than one that is esteemed of regular features.

THAT there is an intermediate hill, intercepting my view of a nobleman's seat, whose ill-obtained superiority I cannot bear to recollect.

THAT my estate is over-run with brambles, resounds with cataracts, and is beautifully varied with rocks and precipices, rather than an even cultivated spot, fertile of corn, or wine, or oil; or those kinds of productions in which the sons of men delight themselves.

THAT as thou dividest thy bounties impartially; giving riches to one, and the contempt of riches to another, so thou hast given me, in the midst of poverty, to despise the insolence of riches, and by declining all emulation that is founded upon wealth, to maintain the dignity and superiority of the Muses.

THAT I have a disposition either so elevated or so ingenuous, that I can derive to myself amusement from the very expedients and contrivances with which rigorous necessity furnishes my invention.

THAT I can laugh at my own follies, foibles, and infirmities; and that I do not want infirmities to employ this disposition.

THIS poor gentleman caught cold one winter's night, as he was contemplating, by the side of a crystal stream, by moonshine. This afterwards terminated in a fever that was fatal to him. Since his death, I

have been favoured with the inspection of his poetry, of which I preserved a catalogue for the benefit of my readers.

Occasional Poems

On his dog, that growing corpulent refused a crust when it was offered him.

To the memory of a pair of breeches that had done him excellent service.

Having lost his trusty walking-staff, he complaineth.

To his mistress, on her declaring that she loved parsnips better than potatoes.

On an ear-wig that crept into a nectarin that it might be swallowed by Cloe.

On cutting an artichoke in his garden the day that Queen Ann cut her little finger.

Epigram on a wooden-peg.

Ode to the memory of the great modern—who first invented shoe-buckles.

On Reserve

VIRTUES, like essences, lose their fragrance when exposed. They are sensitive plants, which will not bear too familiar approaches.

Let us be careful to distinguish modesty, which is

ever amiable, from reserve, which is only prudent. A man is hated sometimes for pride, when it was an excess of humility gave the occasion.

What is often termed shyness, is nothing more than refined sense, and an indifference to common observations.

The reserved man's intimate acquaintance are, for the most part, fonder of him, than the persons of a more affable character, i.e., he pays them a greater compliment than the other can do his, as he distinguishes them more.

It is indolence, and the pain of being upon one's guard, that makes one hate an artful character.

The most reserved of men, that will not exchange two syllables together in an English coffee-house, should they meet at Ispahan, would drink sherbet, and eat a mess of rice together.

A reserved man often makes it a rule to leave company with a good speech: And I believe sometimes proceeds so far as to leave company, because he has made one. Yet it is his fate often, like the mole, to imagine himself deep, when he is near the surface.

Were it prudent to decline this reserve, and this horror of disclosing foibles; to give up a part of character to secure the rest? The world will certainly insist upon having some part to pull to pieces. Let us throw out some follies to the envious; as we give up counters to an highwayman, or a barrel to a whale, in order to save one's money and one's ship: To let it make

exceptions to one's head of hair, if one can escape being stabbed in the back.

THE reserved man should drink double glasses.

PRUDENT men lock up their motives; letting familiars have a key to their heart, as to their garden.

A RESERVED man is in continual conflict with the social part of his nature; and even grudges himself the laugh into which he sometimes is betrayed,

'Seldom he smiles—
And smiles in such a sort as he disdained
Himself—that could be moved to smile at any thing.'

'A FOOL and his words are soon parted;' for so should the proverb run.

COMMON understandings, like cits in gardening, allow no shades to their picture.

MODESTY often passes for errant haughtiness; as what is deemed spirit in an horse proceeds from fear.

THE higher character a person supports, the more he should regard his minutest actions.

THE reserved man should bring a certificate of his honesty, before he be admitted into company.

RESERVE is no more essentially connected with understanding, than a church-organ with devotion, or wine with good nature.

On Vanity

FALSEHOODS upon a tomb or monument may be intitled to some excuse in the affection, the gratitude, and piety, of surviving friends. Even grief itself disposes us to magnify the virtues of a relation, as visible objects also appear larger through tears. But the man who through an idle vanity suffers his features to be bely'd or exchanged for others of a more agreeable make, may with great truth be said to lose his property in the portrait. In like manner, if he encourage the painter to bely his dress, he seems to transfer his claim to the man with whose station his assumed trappings are connected.

I REMEMBER a bag-piper, whose physiognomy was so remarkable & familiar to a club he attended, that it was agreed to have his picture placed over their chimney-piece. There was this remarkable in the fellow, that he chose always to go bare-foot, though he was daily offered a pair of shoes. However, when the painter had been so exact as to omit this little piece of dress, the fellow offered all he had in the world, the whole produce of three nights harmony, to have those feet covered in the effigie, which he so much scorned to cover in the original. Perhaps he thought it a disgrace to his instrument to be eternized in the hands of so much apparent poverty. However, when a person of low station adorns himself with trophies to which he has no pretensions to aspire, he should consider the picture as actually telling a lye to posterity.

The absurdity of this is evident, if a person assume to himself a mitre, a blue garter, or a coronet, improperly; but station may be falsified by other decorations, as well as these.

But I am driven into this grave discourse, on a subject perhaps not very important, by a real fit of spleen. I this morning saw a fellow drawn in a night-gown of so rich a stuff, that the expence, had he purchased such a one, would more than half have ruined him; and another coxcomb, seated by his painter in a velvet chair, who would have been surprised at the deference paid him, had he been offered a cushion.

An Adventure

IT is a very convenient piece of knowledge for a person upon a journey, to know the compellations with which it is proper to address those he happens to meet by his way. Some accuracy here may be of use to him who would be well directed either in the length or the tendency of his road; or be freed from any itinerary difficulties incident to those who do not know the country. It may not be indeed imprudent to accost a passenger with a title superior to what he may appear to claim. This will seldom fail to diffuse a wonderful alacrity in his countenance; and be, perhaps, a method of securing you from any mistake of greater importance.

I was led into these observations by some solicitudes I lately underwent, on account of my ignorance in these peculiarities. Being somewhat more versed in books than I can pretend to be in the orders of men, it was my fortune to undertake a journey, which I was to perform by means of enquiries. I had passed a number of miles without any sort of difficulty, by help of the manifold instructions that had been given me on my setting out. At length, being something dubious

concerning my way, I met a person, whom, from his night-cap & several domestic parts of dress, I deemed to be of the neighbourhood. His station of life appeared to me, to be what we call a gentleman-farmer; a sort of subaltern character, in respect of which the world seems not invariably determined. It is in short what King Charles the second esteemed the happiest of all stations; superior to the toilsome task and ridiculous dignity of constable; and as much inferior to the intricate practice and invidious decisions of a justice of peace. 'Honest man,' says I, 'be so good as to inform me whether I am in the way to Mirlington?' He replied, with a sort of surliness, that he knew nothing of the matter; and turned away with as much disgust, as though I had called him rogue or rascal.

I DID not readily penetrate the cause of his displeasure, but proceeded on my way, with hopes to find other means of information. The next I met was a young fellow, dressed in all the pride of rural spruceness; and, beside him, walked a girl in a dress agreeable to that of her companion. As I presumed him by no means averse to appear considerable in the eyes of his mistress, I supposed a compliment might not be disagreeable; and enquiring the road to Mirlington, addressed him by the name of 'Honesty.' The fellow, whether to shew his wit before his mistress, or whether he was displeased with my familiarity, I cannot tell, directed me to follow a part of my face (which I was well assured could be no guide to me), and that other parts would follow of consequence.

THE next I met, appeared, by his look and gait, to stand high in his own opinion. I therefore judged the best way of proceeding was to adapt my phrase to his

own ideas, and saluting him by the name of 'Sir,' desired to obtain some insight into my road. My gentleman, without hesitation, gave me ample instructions for the rest of my journey.

I PASSED on, musing with myself, why an appellation relative to fortune should be preferred to one founded on merit; when I happened to behold a gentleman examining a sun-dial in his garden. 'Friend,' says I, 'will you tell me what o'clock it is?' he made me no sort of answer, and seemed as much dissatisfied with my openness of temper, as with the confidence I placed in his.—The refusal of an answer in this case was not of much importance. I proceeded on my way, and happened to meet a very old woman, whom I determined to accost by the appellation of 'Dame;' and withal wished her a good night.

BUT alas! she seemed so little pleased with the manner of my address, that she returned me no manner of thanks for my kind wishes as to her repose. It is not clear whether my phrase was faulty, in regard to her dignity, or in respect of her age. But it is very probable she might conclude it an impropriety in respect of both.

I HAD by this time found the inconvenience of an utter ignorance in rural distinctions. The future part of my journey afforded me yet further means of conviction. I was exposed to the danger of three quicksands, by calling a girl 'sweetheart,' instead of 'madam'; and was within a foot of rushing down a precipice, by calling another, 'Forsooth,' who might easily have told me how to avoid it.

In short, I found myself well or ill-used, as I happened, or not, to suit my salutations to people's ideas of their own rank. Towards the last part of my stage, I was to pass a brook, so much swelled by land-floods, that the proper way through it was undistinguishable. A well-dressed gentleman was passing a bridge on my left-hand. It was here of much importance for me to succeed in my enquiry. I was, therefore, meditating within myself which might be the most endearing of all appellations; and at last besought him to give me some instructions, under the name of 'Honest Friend.' He was not seemingly so much pleased as I assured myself he would be, and trudged onward without reply. After this, I had not gone many steps (out of the path, for so it proved) before I found myself and horse plunged headlong in the brook; and my late honest friend in a laughter at our downfall.

I made a shift, however, to recover both myself and horse; and, after a few more difficulties, arrived at the end of my journey. I have since made strict enquiry into the due application of such inferior titles, and may, perhaps, communicate them to you, on some future occasion. In the mean time, you may, if you please, consider the vast importance of superior titles, when there is no one so inconsiderable but there is also a mind that it can influence.

On Modesty and Impudence

BASHFULNESS is more frequently connected with good sense, than we find assurance: and impudence, on the other hand, is often the mere effect of downright stupidity. On this account, the man of

genius has as much the advantage of his antagonist, as a race-horse, carrying a small weight, has over his rival that bears a larger: modesty, like the weight to which I allude, not suffering its owner to exert his real strength; which effrontery is allowed to do, without lett or impediment.

It may be urged, and justly enough, that 'tis common to be partial to the modest man; and that diffidence makes good amends for any restraint it lays us under, by the prejudice it gives every hearer in our favour. But indeed this can only happen, where it meets with the most ingenuous judges. Otherwise a laugh will carry the day, with which the ignorant side is generally best accommodated.

In order to put these antagonists upon a somewhat more equal footing, I have invented the following instrument; for the sole structure and sale of which, I am not without hopes of procuring a patent. What I mean, is an artificial laughter. There are few so little conversant in toys, but must have seen instruments mechanically framed to counterfeit the voices of different birds. The quail-pipe is brought to such perfection as even to delude the very species. The cuckow has been mimicked with no less accuracy. Would it not then be an easy matter to represent the laugh of this empty tribe, which has in itself something artificial; and is not more affected than it is particular? For the convenience of the person that bears it, its dimensions should be so contrived as that it might be played on in his pocket. Does it not seem feasible, that a laughter of this kind may be brought to answer every purpose of that noise which it resembles? If there be occasion for an expletive, let the owner seek

it in his fobb; as his antagonist would find his account in a loud oath or an empty pun. If there be need of a good sounding cadence at the close of a common period, it may not be amiss to harmonise a sentence by what may be called a finishing stroke. This instrument is so contrived as to produce all the variety of an human laugh; and this variation is to be regulated, not by the nature of your subject, nor the wit or humour of a repartee, but by the disposition of the company, and the proper minute for such an interlude. But to become a master of the said machine, let the candidate for applause frequent the company of vociferous disputants; among whom he may soon learn how to perform a conversation.

One or two of these instruments I have already finished, though not indeed to the perfection at which I expect they may soon arrive. A gentleman visited me t'other day, who has the justest claim that can be, to the use of them: having nothing in his character that can obscure the greatest merit, but the greatest modesty. I communicated my invention, desiring him to make trial of it, on the first occasion. He did so: and when I saw him next, gave me leave to publish the following account of its efficacy in my next advertisement. The first time I employed it, said my friend, was in a sort of controversy with a beau; who had contrived means, by the use of his snuff-box, to supply both want of language and of thought. In this manner he prolonged his argument; and really to the company, which consisted of ladies, discovered more sagacity without thinking, than I could do by its assistance. I bethought myself immediately of your instrument, and had recourse to it. I observed in what part of his discourse he most employed his fingers, and

had suddenly recourse to mine, with equal emphasis and significancy. The art was not discovered, ere I had routed my antagonist; having seated myself in a dark corner, where my operations were not discernible. I observed, that as he found himself more closely pressed, he grew more and more assiduous in his application to his snuff-box, much as an otter closely pursued is forced to throw up bubbles that shew his distress. I therefore discovered gradually less and less occasion for speaking; and for thinking, none at all. I played only a flourish in answer to the argument at his finger's ends; and after a while found him as mortal in this part as in any other. When his cause was just expiring, after a very long pursuit, and many fruitless turnings and evasions in the course of it, I sounded my instrument, with as much alacrity as a huntsman does his horn on the death of an hare.

The next whom I engaged was a more formidable disputant; and I own, with a sense of gratitude, that your instrument alone could render me a match for him. His strength of argument was his strength of lungs; and he was, unquestionably, an able antagonist. However, if your machine put me upon a par with him, I think I may say without vanity, that in point of reason, I had the upper hand. I shall only add that as it was habitual for him to answer arguments by vociferation, so it became needless for me to give him any answer of a better kind.

Thus far my friend: I do not question but there will appear artists, that shall undertake to instruct the diffident, the submissive, & the bashful, how to perform the whole gamut of oratorical and risible music: and as there is a kind of humorous laughter, which draws

all others into its own vortex, I need not here assert that I would have this branch very much inculcated.

Neither is this instrument of importance in dispute alone, or controversy; but wherever one man's faculties are more prone to laughter than another's. Trifles will burst one man's sides, which will not disturb the features of another; and a laugh one cannot join, is almost as irksome as a lamentation. 'Tis like a peal rung after a wedding; where a whole parish shall be stunned with noise, because they want that occasion to rejoice, which the persons at least imagine to be their lot, that occasioned it. The sounds are pleasing to their ears, who find them conformable to their own ideas; but those who are not in temper, or unconcerned, find them a stupefying repetition.

When therefore my mind is not in tune with another's, what strikes his, will not vibrate on mine. All I then have to do, is to counterfeit a laugh; which is an operation as artificial, as the machine I have been describing.

Unconnected Thoughts on Gardening

Landskip should contain variety enough to form a picture upon canvas; and this is no bad test, as I think the landskip-painter is the gardener's best designer. The eye requires a sort of balance here; but not so as to encroach upon probable nature. A wood, or hill, may balance a house or obelisk; for exactness would be displeasing. We form our notions from what we have seen; and though, could we comprehend the universe, we might perhaps find it uniformly regular;

yet the portions that we see of it, habituate our fancy to the contrary.

It is not easy to account for the fondness of former times for straight-lined avenues to their houses: straight-lined walks through their woods; and, in short, every kind of straight line; where the foot is to travel over, what the eye has done before. This circumstance is one objection. Another, somewhat of the same kind, is the repetition of the same object, tree after tree, for a length of way together. A third is, that this identity is purchased by the loss of that variety, which the natural country supplies every where, in a greater or less degree. To stand still and survey such avenues, may afford some slender satisfaction, through the change derived from perspective; but to move on continually and find no change of scene in the least attendant on our change of place, must give actual pain to a person of taste. For such an one to be condemned to pass along the famous vista* from Moscow to Petersburg, or that other from Agra to Lahor in India, must be as disagreeable a sentence, as to be condemned to labour at the gallies. I conceived some idea of the sensation he must feel, from walking but a few minutes, immured, betwixt Lord D—'s high shorn yew-hedges; which run exactly parallel, at the distance of about ten feet; and are contrived perfectly to exclude all kind of objects whatsoever.

When a building, or other object, has been once viewed from its proper point, the foot should never travel to it by the same path, which the eye has travelled over before. Lose the object, and draw nigh, obliquely.

* In Montesquieu, on Taste.

THE side-trees in vistas should be so circumstanced as to afford a probability that they grew by nature.

RUINATED structures appear to derive their power of pleasing, from the irregularity of surface, which is VARIETY; and the latitude they afford the imagination, to conceive an enlargement of their dimensions, or to recollect any events of circumstances appertaining to their pristine grandeur, so far as concerns grandeur and solemnity. The breaks in them should be as bold and abrupt as possible.—If mere beauty be aimed at (which however is not their chief excellence) the waving line, with more easy transitions, will become of greater importance.—Events relating to them may be simulated by numberless little artifices; but it is ever to be remembered that high hills and sudden descents are most suitable to castles; & fertile vales, near wood and water, most imitative of the usual situation for abbeys and religious houses; large oaks, in particular, are essential to these latter;

'Whose branching arms, and reverend height,
Admit a dim religious light.'

A COTTAGE is a pleasing object, partly on account of the variety it may introduce; on account of the tranquillity that seems to reign there; and perhaps (I am somewhat afraid) on account of the pride of human nature:

'Longi alterius spectare laborem.'*

In a scene presented to the eye, objects should never lie so much to the right or left, as to give it any uneasiness in the examination. Sometimes, however, it may be better to admit valuable objects even with this disadvantage. They should else never be seen

* EXPLANATION.—At distance to behold another's labour.

beyond a certain angle. The eye must be easy, before it can be pleased.

No mere slope from one side to the other can be agreeable ground: The eye requires a balance—i.e., a degree of uniformity; but this may be otherwise effected, & the rule should be understood with some limitation.

'—Each alley has its brother,
And half the platform just reflects the other.'

Let us examine what may be said in favour of that regularity which Mr. Pope exposes. Might he not seemingly as well object to the disposition of an human face, because it has an eye or cheek that is the very picture of its companion? Or does not Providence, who has observed this regularity in the external structure of our bodies, and disregarded it within, seem to consider it as a beauty? The arms, the limbs, and the several parts of them correspond, but it is not the same case with the thorax and the abdomen. I believe one is generally sollicitous for a kind of balance in a landskip: and, if I am not mistaken, the painters generally furnish one: a building for instance on one side, contrasted by a group of trees, a large oak, or a rising hill on the other. Whence then does this taste proceed, but from the love we bear to regularity in perfection? After all, in regard to gardens, the shape of ground, the disposition of trees, and the figure of water, must be sacred to nature; and no forms must be allowed that make a discovery of art.

All trees have a character analogous to that of men: Oaks are in all respects the perfect image of the manly character: In former times I should have said, and in present times I think I am authorized to say, the British

one. As a brave man is not suddenly either elated by prosperity or depressed by adversity, so the oak displays not its verdure on the sun's first approach; nor drops it, on his first departure. Add to this its majestic appearance, the rough grandeur of its bark, and the wide protection of its branches.

A LARGE, branching, aged oak, is perhaps the most venerable of all inanimate objects.

BY the way, I wonder that lead statues are not more in vogue in our modern gardens. Though they may not express the finer lines of an human body, yet they seem perfectly well calculated, on account of their duration, to embellish landskips, were they some degrees inferior to what we generally behold. A statue in a room challenges examination, and is to be examined critically as a statue. A statue in a garden is to be considered as one part of a scene or landskip; the minuter touches are no more essential to it, than a good landskip-painter would esteem them were he to represent a statue in his picture.

CONCERNING scenes, the more uncommon they appear, the better, provided they form a picture, and include nothing that pretends to be of nature's production, and is not. The shape of ground, the site of trees, & the fall of water, are nature's province. Whatever thwarts her is treason.

ON the other hand, buildings and the works of art need have no other reference to nature than that they afford the ενσεμνον with which the human mind is delighted.

Art should never be allowed to set a foot in the province of nature, otherwise than clandestinely and by night. Whenever she is allowed to appear here, and men begin to compromise the difference — night, gothicism, confusion, and absolute chaos are come again.

To see one's urns, obelisks, and waterfalls laid open; the nakedness of our beloved mistresses, the Naiads and the Dryads, exposed by that ruffian Winter to universal observation; is a severity scarcely to be supported by the help of blazing hearths, chearful companions, and a bottle of the most grateful burgundy.

The works of a person that builds begin immediately to decay; while those of him who plants begin directly to improve. In this, planting promises a more lasting pleasure, than building; which, were it to remain in equal perfection, would at best begin to moulder and want repairs in imagination. Now trees have a circumstance that suits our taste, and that is annual variety. It is inconvenient indeed, if they cause our love of life to take root and flourish with them; whereas the very sameness of our structures will, without the help of dilapidation, serve to wean us from our attachment to them.

The taste of the citizen and of the mere peasant are in all respects the same. The former gilds his balls; paints his stone-work & statues white; plants his trees in lines or circles; cuts his yew-trees four-square or comic; or gives them what he can of the resemblance of birds, or bears, or men; squirts up his rivulets in jetteaus; in short, admires no part of nature, but her ductility; exhibits every thing that is glaring, that implies

expence, or that effects a surprize because it is unnatural. The peasant is his admirer.

I HAVE used the word land-skip gardeners; because, in pursuance of our present taste in gardening, every good painter of landskip appears to me the most proper designer. The misfortune of it is, that these painters are apt to regard the execution of their work, much more than the choice of subject.

HEDGES appearing as such, are universally bad. They discover art in nature's province.

TREES in hedges partake of their artificiality, and become a part of them. There is no more sudden and obvious improvement, than an hedge removed, and the trees remaining; yet not in such manner as to mark out the former hedge.

IT was the wise remark of some sagacious observer, that familiarity is for the most part productive of contempt. Graceless offspring of so amiable a parent! Unfortunate beings that we are, whose enjoyments must be either checked, or prove destructive of themselves. Our passions are permitted to sip a little pleasure; but are extinguished by indulgence, like a lamp overwhelmed with oil. Hence we neglect the beauty with which we have been intimate; nor would any addition it could receive, prove an equivalent for the advantage it derived from the first impression. Thus, negligent of graces that have the merit of reality, we too often prefer imaginary ones that have only the charm of novelty: And hence we may account, in general, for the preference of art to nature, in our old-fashioned gardens.

Art, indeed, is often requisite to collect & epitomize the beauties of nature: but should never be suffered to set her mark upon them: I mean, in regard to those articles that are of nature's province; the shaping of ground, the planting of trees, and the disposition of lakes and rivulets. Many more particulars will soon occur, which, however, she is allowed to regulate, somewhat clandestinely, upon the following account —Man is not capable of comprehending the universe at one survey. Had he faculties equal to this, he might well be censured for any minute regulations of his own. It were the same, as if, in his present situation, he strove to find amusement in contriving the fabric of an ant's nest, or the partitions of a bee-hive. But we are placed in the corner of a sphere; endued neither with organs, nor allowed a station, proper to give us an universal view; or to exhibit to us the variety, the orderly proportions, and dispositions of the system. We perceive many breaks and blemishes, several neglected & unvariegated places in the part; which, in the whole, would appear either imperceptible, or beautiful. And we might as rationally expect a snail to be satisfied with the beauty of our parterres, slopes, and terraces—or an ant to prefer our buildings to her own orderly range of granaries, as that man shall be satisfied, without a single thought that he can improve the spot that falls to his share. But, though art be necessary for collecting nature's beauties, by what reason is she authorized to thwart and oppose her? Why fantastically endeavour to humanize those vegetables, of which nature, discreet nature, thought it proper to make trees? Why endow the vegetable bird with wings, which nature has made momentarily dependent upon the soil? Here art seems very affectedly to make a display of that industry, which it is her glory

to conceal. The stone which represents an asterisk, is valued only on account of its natural production: Nor do we view with pleasure the laboured carvings and futile diligence of Gothic artists. We view with much more satisfaction some plain Grecian fabric, where art, indeed, has been equally, but less visibly, industrious. It is thus we, indeed, admire the shining texture of the silkworm; but we loath the puny author, when she thinks proper to emerge; and to disgust us with the appearance of so vile a grub.

But this is merely true in regard to the particulars of nature's province; wherein art can only appear as the most abject vassal, and had, therefore, better not appear at all. The case is different where she has the direction of buildings, useful or ornamental: or, perhaps, claims as much honour from temples, as the deities to whom they are inscribed. Here then it is her interest to be seen as much as possible: And, though nature appear doubly beautiful by the contrast her structures furnish, it is not easy for her to confer a benefit which nature, on her side, will not repay.

A rural scene to me is never perfect without the addition of some kind of building: Indeed, I have known a scar of rock-work, in great measure, supply the deficiency.

In gardening, it is no small point to enforce either grandeur or beauty by surprize; for instance, by abrupt transition from their contraries—but to lay a stress upon surprize only; for example, on the surprize occasioned by an aha! without including any nobler purpose; is a symptom of bad taste, and a violent fondness for mere concetto.

The hedge-row apple-trees in Herefordshire afford a most beautiful scenery, at the time they are in blossom: But the prospect would be really grander, did it consist of simple foliage. For the same reason, a large oak (or beech) in autumn, is a grander object than the same in spring. The sprightly green is then obfuscated.

Mr. Addison thought an open uninclosed champain country, formed the best landskip. Somewhat here is to be considered. Large unvariegated, simple objects have the best pretentions to sublimity; a large mountain, whose sides are unvaried with objects, is grander than one with infinite variety: But then its beauty is proportionably less.

However, I think a plain space near the eye gives it a kind of liberty it loves: And then the picture, whether you choose the grand or beautiful, should be held up at its proper distance. Variety is the principal ingredient in beauty; and simplicity is essential to grandeur.

Offensive objects, at a proper distance, acquire even a degree of beauty: for instance, stubble fallow ground—

On Politics

PERHAPS men of the most different sects and parties very frequently think the same; only vary in their phrase and language. At least, if one examines their first principles, which very often coincide, it were a point of prudence, as well as candor, to consider the rest as nothing more.

If national reflections are unjust, because there are good men in all nations, are not national wars upon much the same footing?

A government is inexcusable for employing foolish ministers; because they may examine a man's head, though they cannot his heart.

I fancy, the proper means of encreasing the love we bear our native country, is to reside some time in a foreign one.

The love of popularity seems little else than the love of being beloved; and is only blameable when a person aims at the affections of a people by means in appearance honest, but in their end pernicious & destructive.

There ought, no doubt, to be heroes in society as well as butchers; and who knows but the necessity of butchers (inflaming and stimulating the passions with animal food) might at first occasion the necessity of heroes? Butchers, I believe, were prior.

The whole mystery of a courtly behaviour feems included in the power of making general favors appear particular ones.

A man of remarkable genius may afford to pass by a piece of wit, if it happens to border on abuse. A little genius is obliged to catch at every witticism indiscriminately.

Indolence is a kind of centripetal force.

It seems idle to rail at ambition merely because it is

a boundless passion; or rather is not this circumstance an argument in its favor? If one would be employed or amused through life, should we not make choice of a passion that will keep one long in play?

The submission of Prince Hal to the civil magistrate that committed him, was more to his honour than all the conquests of Henry the Fifth in France.

Laws are generally found to be nets of such a texture, as the little creep through, the great break through, and the middle-sized are alone entangled in.

Though I have no sort of inclination to vindicate the late rebellion, yet I am led by candor to make some distinction between the immorality of its abettors, and the illegality of their offence. My Lord Hardwick, in his condemnation-speech, remarks, with great propriety, that the laws of all nations have adjudged rebellion to be the worst of crimes. And in regard to civil societies, I believe there are none but madmen will dispute it. But surely with regard to conscience, erroneous judgments & ill-grounded convictions may render it some people's duty. Sin does not consist in any deviation from received opinion; it does not depend upon the understanding, but the will. Now, if it appears that a man's opinion has happened to misplace his duty; and this opinion has not been owing to any vicious desire of indulging his appetites—In short, if his own reason, liable to err, have biassed his will; rather than his will any way contributed to bias and deprave his reason, he will, perhaps, appear guilty before none, beside an earthly tribunal.

If a person ought heartily to stickle for any cause, it

should be that of moderation. Moderation should be his party.

Egotisms from my own sensations

Inanimates, toys, utensils, seem to merit a kind of affection from us, when they have been our companions through various vicissitudes. I have often viewed my watch, standish, snuff-box, with this kind of tender regard; allotting them a degree of friendship, which there are some men, who do not deserve:

'Midst many faithless only faithful found!'

I loved Mr. Somervile, because he knew so perfectly what belonged to the flocci-nauci-nihili-pilification of money.

It is with me in regard to the earth itself, as it is in regard to those that walk upon its surface. I love to pass by crowds, and to catch distant views of the country as I walk along; but I insensibly choose to sit where I cannot see two yards before me.

I begin, too soon in life, to slight the world more than is consistent with making a figure in it. The 'non est tanti*' of Ovid grows upon me so fast that in a few years I shall have no passion.

I am obliged to the person that speaks me fair to my face. I am only more obliged to the man who speaks well of me in my absence also. Should I be asked whether I chose to have a person speak well of me when absent or present, I should answer the latter;

*Explanation.—It is not of such extraordinary consequence.

for were all men to do so, the former would be insignificant.

It is a miserable thing to love where one hates; and yet it is not inconsistent.

The modern world considers it as a part of politeness, to drop the mention of kindred in all addresses to relations. There is no doubt, that it puts our approbation and esteem upon a less partial footing. I think, where I value a friend, I would not suffer my relation to be obliterated even to the twentieth generation: it serves to connect us closer. Wherever I disesteemed, I would abdicate my first cousin.

I am surely more inclined (of the two) to pretend a false disdain, than an unreal esteem.

Yet why repine? I have seen mansions on the verge of Wales that convert my farm-house into an Hampton-court, and where they speak of a glazed window as a great piece of magnificence. All things figure by comparison.

I do not so much want to avoid being cheated, as to afford the expence of being so: The generality of mankind being seldom in good humour but whilst they are imposing upon you in some shape or other.

I cannot avoid comparing the ease and freedom I enjoy, to the ease of an old shoe; where a certain degree of shabbiness is joined with the convenience.

Not Hebrew, Arabic, Syriac, Coptic, nor even the

Chinese language, seems half so difficult to me as the language of refusal.

THE ways of ballad-singers, and the cries of halfpenny pamphlets, appeared so extremely humorous, from my lodgings in Fleet-street, that it gave me pain to observe them without a companion to partake. For alas, laughter is by no means a solitary entertainment.

I THINK, I have observed universally that the quarrels of friends in the latter part of life, are never truly reconciled. 'Malè sarta gratia necquicquam coit, et rescinditur.*' A wound in the friendship of young persons, as in the bark of young trees, may be so grown over, as to leave no scar. The case is very different in regard to old persons and old timber. The reason of this may be accountable from the decline of the social passions, and the prevalance of spleen, suspicion, and rancour, towards the latter part of life.

THERE is nothing, to me, more irksome than to hear weak and servile people repeat with admiration every silly speech that falls from a mere person of rank and fortune. It is *crambe bis cocta*.—The nonsense grows more nauseous through the medium of their admiration, and shews the venality of vulgar tempers, which can consider fortune as the goddess of wit.

WHAT pleasure it is to pay one's debts! I remember to have heard Sir T. Lyttelton make the same observation. It seems to flow from a combination of circumstances, each of which is productive of pleasure. In the first place, it removes that uneasiness which a true

* EXPLANATION.—An ill-compounded reconciliation is unavailing, and easily cancelled again.

spirit feels from dependence and obligation. It affords pleasure to the creditor, & therefore gratifies our social affection: It promotes that future confidence, which is so very interesting to an honest mind: It opens a prospect of being readily supplied with what we want on future occasions: It leaves a consciousness of our own virtue: and it is a measure we know to be right, both in point of justice & of sound œconomy. Finally it is a main support of simple reputation.

It is a maxim with me (and I would recommend it to others also, upon the score of prudence) whenever I lose a person's friendship, who generally commences enemy, to engage a fresh friend in his place. And this may be best effected by bringing over some of one's enemies; by which means one is a gainer, having the same number of friends at least, if not an enemy the less. Such a method of proceeding should, I think, be as regularly observed as the distribution of vacant ribbons, upon the death of knights of the garter.

It has been a maxim with me to admit of an easy reconciliation with a person whose offence proceeded from no depravity of heart: But where I was convinced it did so, to forego, for my own sake, all opportunities of revenge: to forget the persons of my enemies as much as I was able, and to call to remembrance in their place, the more pleasing idea of my friends. I am convinced that I have derived no small share of happiness from this principle.

I have been formerly so silly as to hope, that, every servant I had might be made a friend: I am now convinced that the nature of servitude generally bears a contrary tendency. People's characters are to be

collected from their education and place in life: Birth itself does but little. Kings in general are born with the same propensities as other men; but yet it is probable, from the licence and flattery that attends their education, that they will be more haughty, more luxurious, and more subjected to their passions, than any men beside. I question not but there are many attorneys born with open and honest hearts: but I know not one, that has had the least practice, who is not selfish, trickish, and disingenuous. So it is the nature of servitude to discard all generous motives of obedience; & to point out no other than those scoundrel ones of interest and fear. There are however some exceptions to this rule, which I know by my own experience.

On Dress

DRESS, like writing, should never appear the effect of too much study and application. On this account, I have seen parts of dress, in themselves extremely beautiful, which at the same time subject the wearer to the character of foppishness and affectation.

Extreme elegance in liveries, I mean such as is exprest by the more languid colours, is altogether absurd. They ought to be rather gawdy than genteel; if for no other reason, yet for this, that elegance may more strongly distinguish the appearance of the gentleman.

I think, till thirty, or with some a little longer, people should dress in a way that is most likely to procure the love of the opposite sex.

Love can be founded upon nature only: or the appearance of it—For this reason, however a peruke may tend to soften the human features, it can very seldom make amends for the mixture of artifice which it discovers.

A rich dress adds but little to the beauty of a person. It may possibly create a deference, but that is rather an enemy to love:

'Non benè conveniunt nec in una sede morantur
Majestas et amor.*' Ovid.

Simplicity can scarce be carried too far; provided it be not so singular as to excite a degree of ridicule. The same caution may be requisite in regard to the value of your dress; though splendor be not necessary, you must remove all appearance of poverty: the ladies being rarely enough sagacious to acknowledge beauty through the disguise of poverty. Indeed, I believe sometimes they mistake grandeur of dress, for beauty of person.

A person's manner is never easy, whilst he feels a consciousness that he is fine. The country-fellow, considered in some lights, appears genteel; but it is not when he is drest on Sundays, with a large nosegay in his bosom. It is when he is reaping, making hay, or when he is hedging in his hurden frock. It is then he acts with ease, and thinks himself equal to his apparel.

When a man has run all lengths himself with regard to dress, there is but one means remaining which can

*Imitation.—Grandeur and love but ill agree,
Love flies from pomp and pageantry.

add to his appearance. And this consists in having recourse to the utmost plainness in his own apparel, and at the same time richly garnishing his footman or his horse. Let the servant appear as fine as ever you please, the world must always consider the master as his superior. And this is that peculiar excellence so much admired in the best painters as well as poets; Raphael as well as Virgil: Where somewhat is left to be supplied by the spectator's & reader's imagination.

PERSONS are oftentimes misled in regard to their choice of dress, by attending to the beauty of colours, rather than selecting such colours as may encrease their own beauty.

I CANNOT see why a person should be esteemed haughty, on account of his taste for fine cloaths, any more than one who discovers a fondness for birds, flowers, moths or butterflies. Imagination influences both to seek amusement in glowing colours; only the former endeavours to give them a nearer relation to himself. It appears to me, that a person may love splendour without any degree of pride; which is never connected with this taste but when a person demands homage on account of the finery he exhibits. Then it ceases to be taste, and commences mere ambition. Yet the world is not enough candid to make this essential distinction.

THE first instance an officer gives you of his courage, consists in wearing cloaths infinitely superior to his rank.

MEN of quality never appear more amiable than when their dress is plain. Their birth, rank, title, and its

appendages, are at best invidious; and as they do not need the assistance of dress, so, by their disclaiming the advantage of it, they make their superiority sit more easy. It is otherwise with such as depend alone on personal merit; and it was from hence, I presume, that Quin asserted he could not afford to go plain.

THERE are certain shapes and physiognomies, of so entirely vulgar a cast, that they could scarce win respect even in the country, though they were embellished with a dress as tawdry as a pulpit-cloth.

A LARGE retinue upon a small income, like a large cascade upon a small stream, tends to discover its tenuity.

WHY are perfumes so much decried? When a person on his approach diffuses them, does he not revive the idea which the antients ever entertained concerning the descent of superior beings, 'veiled in a cloud of fragrance?'

THE lowest people are generally the first to find fault with show or equipage; especially that of a person lately emerged from his obscurity. They never once consider that he is breaking the ice for themselves.

On WRITING and BOOKS

FINE writing is generally the effect of spontaneous thoughts and a laboured style.

LONG sentences in a short composition are like large rooms in a little house.

The world may be divided into people that read, people that write, people that think, and fox-hunters.

Instead of whining complaints concerning the imagined cruelty of their mistresses, if poets would address the same to their Muse, they would act more agreeably to nature and to truth.

Superficial writers, like the mole, often fancy themselves deep, when they are exceeding near the surface.

There is no word in the Latin language, that signifies a female friend. 'Amica,' means a mistress: and perhaps there is no friendship betwixt the sexes wholly disunited from a degree of love.

The chief advantage that ancient writers can boast over modern ones, seems owing to simplicity. Every noble truth & sentiment was expressed by the former in the natural manner; in word and phrase, simple, perspicuous, and incapable of improvement. What then remained for later writers but affectation, witticism, and conceit?

One can, now and then, reach an author's head when he stoops; and, induced by this circumstance, aspire to measure height with him.

Perhaps, an acquaintance with men of genius is rather reputable than satisfactory. It is as unaccountable, as it is certain, that fancy heightens sensibility; sensibility strengthens passion; and passion makes people humourists.

Yet a person of genius is often expected to shew

more discretion than another man; & this on account of that very vivacity, which is his greatest impediment. This happens for want of distinguishing betwixt the fanciful talents and the dry mathematical operations of the judgment, each of which indiscriminately give the denomination of a man of genius.

It is often observed of wits, that they will lose their best friends for the sake of a joke. Candour may discover, that it is their greater degree of the love of fame, not the less degree of their benevolence, which is the cause.

People in high or in distinguished life ought to have a greater circumspection in regard to their most trivial actions. For instance, I saw Mr. Pope—and what was he doing when you saw him?—why, to the best of my memory, he was picking his nose.

Even Joe Miller in his jests has an eye to poetical justice; generally gives the victory or turns the laugh on the side of merit. No small compliment to mankind!

To say a person writes a good style, is originally as pedantic an expression as to say he plays a good fiddle.

The first line of Virgil seems to patter like an hailstorm—'Tityre, tu patulæ,' &c.

The vanity and extreme self-love of the French is no where more observable than in their authors; and among these, in none more than Boileau; who, besides his rhodomontades, preserves ever the most insipid reading in his notes, though he has removed it from the text for the sake of one ever so much better.

THE writer who gives us the best idea of what may be called the genteel in style and manner of writing, is, in my opinion, my Lord Shaftesbury. Then Mr. Addison and Dr. Swift.

A PLAIN narrative of any remarkable fact, emphatically related, has a more striking effect without the author's comment.

I THINK nothing truly poetic, at least no poetry worth composing, that does not strongly affect one's passions: and this is but slenderly effected by fables, allegories, and lies:

'Incredulus odi*.' Hor.

I HATE a style, as I do a garden, that is wholly flat and regular; that slides along like an eel, and never rises to what one can call an inequality.

IT is obvious to discover that imperfections of one kind have a visible tendency to produce perfections of another. Mr. Pope's bodily disadvantages must incline him to a more laborious cultivation of his talent, without which he foresaw that he must have languished in obscurity. The advantages of person are a good deal essential to popularity in the grave world as well as the gay. Mr. Pope, by an unwearied application to poetry, became not only the favourite of the learned, but also of the ladies.

POPE, I think, never once mentions Prior; though Prior speaks so handsomely of Pope in his Alma. One might imagine that the latter, indebted as he was to the former for such numberless beauties, should have

*EXPLANATION.—Such I detest, and hardly can believe.

readily repaid this poetical obligation. This can only be imputed to pride or party-cunning. In other words, to some modification of selfishness.

POPE seems to me the most correct writer since Virgil; the greatest genius only, since Dryden.

POPE's talent lay remarkably in what one may naturally enough term the condensation of thoughts. I think no other English poet ever brought so much sense into the same number of lines with equal smoothness, ease, and poetical beauty. Let him who doubts of this peruse his Essay on Man with attention. Perhaps, this was a talent from which he could not easily have swerved: Perhaps, he could not have sufficiently rarefied his thoughts to produce that flimziness which is required in a ballad or love-song. His monster of Ragusa & his translations from Chaucer have some little tendency to invalidate this observation.

I DURST not have censured Mr. Pope's writings in his life-time, you say. True. A writer surrounded with all his fame, engaging with another that is hardly known, is a man in armour attacking another in his night-gown and slippers.

THERE is a vast beauty (to me) in using a word of a particular nature in the eighth and ninth syllables of an English verse. I mean what is virtually a dactyl. For instance,

'And pikes, the tyrants of the watry plains.'

Let any person of an ear substitute 'liquid' instead of 'watry' and he will find the disadvantage. Mr. Pope

(who has improved our versification through a judicious disposition of the pause) seems not enough aware of this beauty.

Prudes allow no quarter to such ladies as have fallen a sacrifice to the gentle passion; either because themselves, being borne away by the malignant ones, perhaps never felt the other so powerful as to occasion them any difficulty; or because no one has tempted them to transgress that way themselves. It is the same case with some critics, with regard to the errors of ingenious writers.

Poetry and consumptions are the most flattering of diseases.

Every person insensibly fixes upon some degree of refinement in his discourse, some measure of thought which he thinks worth exhibiting. It is wise to fix this pretty high, although it occasions one to talk the less.

Some men use no other means to acquire respect, than by insisting on it; and it sometimes answers their purpose, as it does an highwayman's in regard to money.

Perfect characters in a poem make but little better figure than regular hills, perpendicular trees, uniform rocks, and level sheets of water, in the formation of a landskip. The reason is, they are not natural, and moreover want variety.

Trifles discover a character more than actions of importance. In regard to the former, a person is off his guard, and thinks it not material to use disguise. It is,

to me, no imperfect hint towards the discovery of a man's character, to say he looks as though you might be certain of finding a pin upon his sleeve.

A POET that fails in writing, becomes often a morose critic. The weak and insipid white-wine makes at length excellent vinegar.

EVERY single observation that is published by a man of genius, be it ever so trivial, should be esteemed of importance; because he speaks from his own impressions; whereas common men publish common things, which they have, perhaps, gleaned from frivolous writers.

THE time of life when fancy predominates, is youth; the season when judgment decides best, is age. Poets therefore, are always, in respect, of their disposition, younger than other persons: a circumstance that gives the latter part of their lives some inconsistency. The cool phlegmatic tribe discover it in the former.

A POET hurts himself by writing prose; as a racehorse hurts his motions by condescending to draw in a team.

THE superior politeness of the French is in nothing more discernible than in the phrases used by them and us to express an affair being in agitation. The former says 'sur la tapis'; the latter 'upon the anvil.' Does it not shew also the sincerity & serious face with which we enter upon business, and the negligent and jaunty air with which they perform even the most important?

A POETICAL genius seems the most elegant of youthful accomplishments; but it is entirely a youthful one.

Flights of fancy, gaiety of behaviour, sprightliness of dress, and a blooming aspect, conspire very amicably to their mutual embellishment; but the poetic talent has no more to do with age, than it would avail his Grace of Canterbury to have a knack at country dances, or a genius for a catch.

The most obsequious Muses, like the fondest and most willing courtezans, seldom leave us any reason to boast much of their favors.

It should seem, the many lies, discernible in books of travels, may be owing to accounts collected from improper people. Were one to give a character of the English, from what the vulgar act & believe, it would convey* a strange idea of the English understanding.

Critics must excuse me, if I compare them to certain animals called asses; who, by gnawing vines, originally taught the great advantage of pruning them.

Every good poet includes a critic; the reverse will not hold.

We want a word to express the 'Hospes' or 'Hospita' of the antients; among them, perhaps, the most respectable of all characters; yet with us translated 'Host,' which we apply also to an Innkeeper. Neither have we any word to express 'Amica,' as if we thought a woman always was somewhat more or less than a friend.

The philosopher, who considered the world as one

*Missionaries clap a tail to every Indian nation that dislikes them.

vast animal, could esteem himself no other than a louse upon the back of it.

Every thing disgusts, but mere simplicity; the scriptural writers describe their heroes using only some such phrase as this: 'Alas! my brother!' 'O Absolom my son! my son!' &c. The lamentation of Saul over Jonathan is more diffuse, but at the same time entirely simple.

Respect is the general end for which riches, power, place, title, and fame, are implicitly desired. When one is possessed of the end, through any one of these means, is it not wholly unphilosophical to covet the remainder?

Lord Shaftesbury, in the genteel management of some familiar ideas, seems to have no equal. He discovers an eloignment from vulgar phrases much becoming a person of quality. His sketches should be studied, like those of Raphael. His Enquiry is one of the shortest and clearest systems of morality.

The question is, whether you distinguish me, because you have better sense than other people; or whether you seem to have better sense than other people because you distinguish me.

One feels the same kind of disgust in reading Roman history, which one does in novels, or even epic poetry. We too easily foresee to whom the victory will fall. The hero, the knight errant, and the Roman, are too seldom overcome.

I wish but two editions of all books whatsoever. One

of the simple text, published by a society of able hands: another with the various readings, and remarks of the ablest commentators.

To endeavour, all one's days, to fortify our minds with learning & philosophy, is to spend so much in armour that one has nothing left to defend.

Books, &c.

IT may in some measure account for the difference of taste in the reading of books, to consider the difference of our ears for music. One is not pleased without a perfect melody of style, be the sense what it will: another, of no ear for music, gives to sense its full weight without any deduction on account of harshness.

Harmony of period and melody of style have greater weight than is generally imagined in the judgment we pass upon writing and writers. As a proof of this, let us reflect, what texts of scripture, what lines in poetry, or what periods we most remember & quote, either in verse or prose, and we shall find them to be only musical ones.

I wonder the antient mythology never shews Apollo enamoured of Venus; considering the remarkable deference that wit has paid to beauty in all ages. The Orientals act more consonantly, when they suppose the nightingale enamoured of the rose; the most harmonious bird of the fairest and most delightful flower.

Hope is a flatterer: but the most upright of all parasite;

for she frequents the poor man's hut, as well as the palace of his superior.

SWIFT in poetry deserves a place somewhere betwixt Butler and Horace. He has the wit of the former, and the graceful negligence which we find in the latter's epistles and satires. I believe few people discover less humour in Don Quixote than myself. For beside the general sameness of adventure, whereby it is easy to foresee what he will do on most occasions, it is not so easy to raise a laugh from the wild achievements of a madman. The natural passion in that case is pity, with some small portion of mirth at most. Sancho's character is indeed comic; and, were it removed from the romance, would discover how little there was of humour in the character of Don Quixote.

Of MEN and MANNERS

THE arguments against pride drawn so frequently by our clergy from the general infirmity, circumstances, and catastrophe of our nature, are extremely trifling and insignificant. Man is not proud as a species, but as an individual; not as comparing himself with other beings, but with his fellow-creatures.

I HAVE often thought that people draw many of their ideas of agreeableness, in regard to proportion, colour, &c., from their own persons.

IT is happy enough that the same vices which impair one's fortune, frequently ruin our constitution, that the one may not survive the other.

Deference often shrinks and withers as much upon the approach of intimacy, as the sensitive plant does upon the touch of one's finger.

The word Folly is, perhaps, the prettiest word in the language. Amusement and Diversion are good well-meaning words: But Pastime is what never should be used but in a bad sense: It is vile to say such a thing is agreeable, because it helps to pass the time away.

The fortunate have many parasites: Hope is the only one that vouchsafes attendance upon the wretched and the beggar.

What some people term Freedom is nothing else than a liberty of saying and doing disagreeable things. It is but carrying the notion a little higher, and it would require us to break and have a head broken reciprocally without offence.

I cannot see why people are ashamed to acknowledge their passion for popularity. The love of popularity is the love of being beloved.

Zealous men are ever displaying to you the strength of their belief, while judicious men are shewing you the grounds of it.

I consider your very testy and quarrelsome people, in the same light as I do a loaded gun; which may by accident go off and kill one.

I am afraid humility to genius is as an extinguisher to a candle.

Many persons, when exalted, assume an insolent

humility, who behaved before with an insolent haughtiness.

Men are sometimes accused of pride, merely because their accusers would be proud themselves, if they were in their places.

Men of fine parts, they say, are often proud; I answer, dull people are seldom so, and both act upon an appearance of reason.

It was observed of a most accomplished lady, that she was withal so very modest, that one sometimes thought she neglected the praises of her wit, because she could depend on those of her beauty; at other times she slighted those of her beauty, knowing she might rely on those of her wit.

In a heavy oppressive atmosphere, when the spirits sink too low, the best cordial is to read over all the letters of one's friends.

Ask to borrow sixpence of the muses, and they tell you at present they are out of cash, but hereafter they will furnish you with five thousand pounds.

The argument against restraining our passions, because we shall not always have it in our power to gratify them, is much stronger for their restraint, than it is for their indulgence.

Few men, that would cause respect & distance merely, can say any thing by which their end will be so effectually answered as by silence.

THERE is nothing more universally commended than a fine day; the reason is, that people can commend it without envy.

MODESTY makes large amends for the pain it gives the persons who labour under it, by the prejudice it affords every worthy person in their favour.

THIRD thoughts often coincide with the first, and are generally the best grounded. We first relish nature and the country; then artificial amusements and the city; then become impatient to retire to the country again.

WHILE we labour to subdue our passions, we should take care not to extinguish them. Subduing our passions, is disengaging ourselves from the world; to which however, whilst we reside in it, we must always bear relation; and we may detach ourselves to such a degree as to pass an useless and insipid life, which we were not meant to do. Our existence here is at least one part of a system.

A MAN has generally the good or ill qualities which he attributes to mankind.

WERE a man of pleasure to arrive at the full extent of his several wishes, he must immediately feel himself miserable. It is one species of despair to have no room to hope for any addition to one's happiness.

HIS following wish must then be to wish he had some fresh object for his wishes. A strong argument that our minds and bodies were both meant to be for ever active.

I HAVE seen one evil underneath the sun, which gives me particular mortification. The reserve or shyness of men of sense generally confines them to a small acquaintance; and they find numbers their avowed enemies, the similarity of whose tastes, had fortune brought them once acquainted, would have rendered them their fondest friends.

A GENTLEMAN of fortune will be often complaining of taxes; that his estate is inconsiderable; that he can never make so much of it as the world is ready to imagine. A mere citizen, on the other hand, is always aiming to shew his riches; says, that he employs so many hands; he keeps his wife a chaise and one; and talks much of his Chinese ornaments at his paltry cake-house in the country. They both aim at praise, but of a very distinct kind. Now, supposing the Cit worth as much in money as the other is in land, the Gentleman surely chuses the better method of ostentation, who considers himself as somewhat superior to his fortune, than he who seems to look up at his fortune, and consequently sets himself beneath it.

THE only kind of revenge which a man of sense need take upon a scoundrel, is, by a series of worthy behaviour, to force him to admire and esteem his enemy and yet irritate his animosity, by declining a reconciliation. As Sir John Falstaff might say, 'turning even quarrels to commodity.'

IT is possible, by means of glue, to connect two pieces of wood together; by a powerful cement, to join marble; by the mediation of a priest, to unite a man and woman; but of all associations the most effectual is betwixt an idiot and a knave. They become in a

manner incorporate. The former seems so framed to admire and idolize the latter, that the latter may seize and devour him as his proper prey.

THE same degree of penetration that shews you another in the wrong, shews him also, in respect to that instance, your inferior: Hence the observation, and the real fact, that people of clear heads are what the world calls opinionated.

THERE is none can baffle men of sense, but fools, on whom they can make no impression.

THE difference there is betwixt honour and honesty, seems to be chiefly in the motive. The mere honest man does that from duty, which the man of honour does for the sake of character.

A MAN of wit, genius, learning, is apt to think it something hard, that men of no wit, no genius, no learning, should have a greater share of wealth and honours; not considering that their own accomplishment ought to be reckoned to them as their equivalent. It is no reason that a person worth five thousand pounds, should on that account have a claim to twenty.

A WIFE ought in reality to love her husband above all the world; but this preference I think should, in point of politeness, be concealed. The reason is, that it is disgusting to see an amiable woman monopolized; and it is easy by proper management to waive (all I contend for) the appearance.

THERE are some wounds given to reputation that are like the wounds of an envenomed arrow; where we

irritate and enlarge the orifice while we extract the bearded weapon; yet cannot the cure be compleated otherwise.

It is with some men as with some horses: what is esteemed spirit in them, proceeds from fear. This was undoubtedly the source of that seeming spirit discovered by Tully in regard to his antagonist M. Antony. He knew he must destroy him, or be destroyed himself.

The same qualities, joined with virtue, often furnish out a great man, which united with a different principle, furnish out an highwayman; I mean courage and strong passions. And they may both join in the same expression, though with a meaning somewhat varied—

'Tentanda via est, qua me quoque possum
Tollere humo*.'

i.e., 'be promoted or be hanged.'

Every single instance of a friend's insincerity encreases our dependence on the efficacy of money. It makes one covet what produces an external respect, when one is disappointed of that which is internal and sincere. This, perhaps, with decaying passions, contributes to render age covetous.

I believe there was never so reserved a solitary, but felt some degree of pleasure at the first glimpse of an human figure. The soul, however unconscious of its social bias in a crowd, will in solitude feel some attraction towards the first person that we meet.

*Imitation.—Let me too try some means t'explore
By which on fame's bright pinions I may soar.

In courts, the motion of the body is easy, and those of the soul constrained: In the country, the gestures of the body are constrained, and those of the soul supine and careless.

It should seem that indolence itself would incline a person to be honest; as it requires infinitely greater pains and contrivance to be a knave.

Titles make a greater distinction than is almost tolerable to a British spirit. They almost vary the species; yet as they are oftentimes conferred, seem not so much the reward, as the substitutes of merit.

What numbers live to the age of fifty or sixty years, yet if estimated by their merit, are not worth the price of a chick, the moment it is hatched.

A lyar begins with making falsehood appear like truth, and ends with making truth itself appear like falsehood.

Fools are very often found united in the strictest intimacies, as the lighter kinds of woods are the most closely glued together.

Persons of great delicacy should know the certainty of the following truth. There are abundance of cases which occasion suspense, in which, whatever they determine, they will repent of their determination; and this through a propensity of human nature to fancy happiness in those schemes, which it does not pursue.

High-spirit in a man is like a sword; which though worn to annoy his enemies, yet is often troublesome

in a less degree to his friends. He can hardly wear it so inoffensively, but it is apt to incommode one or other of the company. It is more properly a loaded pistol, which accident alone may fire, and kill one.

Avarice is the most opposite of all characters to that of God Almighty, whose alone it is to give and not receive.

When a person is so far engaged in a dispute as to wish to get the victory, he ought ever to desist. The idea of conquest will so dazzle him, that it is hardly possible he should discern the truth.

I doubt whether it be not true, that we hate those faults most in others which we are guilty of ourselves.

Virtue seems to be nothing more than a motion consonant to the system of things. Were a planet to fly from its orbit, it would represent a vicious man.

It is difficult not to be angry at beings we know incapable of acting otherwise than they do. One ought no more, if one reflects, to be angry at the stupidity of a man than of a horse, except it be vincible & voluntary; and yet the practice is otherwise.

People say, 'do not regard what he says, now he is in liquor.' Perhaps it is the only time he ought to be regarded; 'Aperit præcordia Liber*.'

Wits uniformly exclaim against fools, yet fools are their proper foil; and it is from them alone they can learn what figure themselves make. Their behaviour

*Explanation.—Wine unlocks the heart.

naturally falls in with the generality, and furnishes a better mirror than that of artful people, who are sure enough to deceive you either on the favourable or the ill-natured side.

We say, he is a man of sense who acknowledges the same truths that we do; that he is a man of taste who allows the same beauties. We consider him as a person of better sense & finer taste, who discerns more truths and more beauties in conjunction with ourselves: but we allow neither appellation to the man who differs from us.

We deal out our genuine esteem to our equals; our affection for those beneath us; and a reluctant sort of respect to those that are above us.

One scarce sees how it is possible for a country girl or a country fellow to preserve their chastity. They have neither the philosophical pleasure of books, nor the luxurious pleasure of a table, nor the refined amusement of building, planting, drawing, or designing, to divert their imagination from an object to which they seem continually to stimulate it by provocative illusions. Add to this the health & vigour that are almost peculiar to them.

I am afraid, there are many ladies who only exchange the pleasures of incontinence for the pleasure they derive from censure. At least it is no injustice to conclude so, where a person is extravagantly censorious.

Some men are called sagacious, merely on account of their avarice: whereas a child can clench its fist the moment it is born.

It is a point of prudence, when you converse with your inferior, to consider yourself as conversing with his inferior, with whom no doubt he may have the same connexion that you have with him: and to be upon your guard accordingly.

A man is not esteemed ill-natured for any excess of social affection; or an indiscreet profusion of his fortune upon his neighbours, companions, or friends; although the true measure of his affections is as much impaired by this, as by selfishness.

If any one's curse can effect damnation, it is not that of the pope, but that of the poor.

People of the finest and most lively genius have the greatest sensibility, of consequence the most lively passions; the violence of which puts their conduct upon a footing with that of fools. Fools discern the weaknesses which they have in common with themselves; but are not sensible of their excellencies, to which they have no pretensions; of course, always inclined to dispute the superiority.

Virtue should be considered as a part of taste (and perhaps it is so more in this age, than in any preceding one) and should as much avoid deceit or sinister meanings in discourse, as they would do puns, bad language or false grammar.

Think, when you are enraged at any one, what would probably become your sentiments should he die during the dispute.

A person, elevated one degree above the populace,

assumes more airs of superiority than one that is raised ten. The reason is somewhat obvious. His superiority is more contestable.

The character of a decent, well-behaved gentleman-like man seems more easily attainable by a person of no great parts or passions, than by one of greater genius and more volatility. 'Tis there no mismanagement, for the former to be chiefly ambitious of it. When a man's capacity does not enable him to entertain or animate the company, it is the best he can do to render himself inoffensive, and to keep his teeth clean. But the person who has talents for discourse, and a passionate desire to enliven conversation, ought to have many improprieties excused, which in the other were unpardonable. A lady of good-nature would forgive the blunder of a country squire, who, through zeal to serve her with a glass of claret, should involve his spurs in her Brussels apron. On the contrary, the fop (who may in some sense use the words of Horace

'Quod verum atque decens curo & rogo &
——omnis in hoc sum')

would be entitled to no pardon for such unaccountable misconduct.

Man, in general, may be considered as a mechanic, and the formation of happiness as his business or employment: Virtue, his repository or collection of instruments; the goods of fortune as his materials: In proportion as the workman, the instruments, and the materials excel, the work will be executed in the greater perfection.

The silly censorious are the very 'fel naturæ,' 'the

most bitter of all bitter things;' from the hyssop that grows upon the wall, to the satyrist that pisses against it.

I HAVE known a sensible man of opinion that one should not be solicitous about a wife's understanding. A woman's sense was with him a phrase to express a degree of knowledge, which was likely to contribute mighty little to a husband's happiness. I cannot be of his opinion. I am convinced, that as judgment is the portion of our sex, so fancy and imagination are more eminently the lot of theirs. If so, after honesty of heart, what is there we should so much require? A wife's beauty will soon decay, it is doubtful whether in reality first, or in our own opinion. Either of these is sufficient to pall the raptures of enjoyment. We are then to seek for something that will retain its novelty; or, what is equivalent, will change its shape when her person palls by its identity. Fancy and genius bid fairest for this, which have as many shapes, as there can happen occasions to exert them. Good-nature, I always suppose. The former will be expedient to exhilarate and divert us; the latter to preserve our minds in a temper to be diverted.

I HAVE known some attornies of reputable families, and whose original dispositions seemed to have been open and humane. Yet can I scarce recollect one, in whom the gentleman, the christian, & even the man, was not swallowed up in the lawyer. They are not only the greatest tyrants, but the greatest pedants of all mankind.

RECONCILIATION is the tenderest part either of friendship or of love; the latter more especially, in which

the soul is more remarkably softened. Were a person to make use of art in procuring the affection of his mistress, it were, perhaps, his most effectual method to contrive a slight estrangement, and then, as it were imperceptibly, bring on a reconciliation. The soul here discovers a kind of elasticity; and, being forced back, returns with an additional violence.

To judge whether one has sufficient pleasure to render the continuation of life agreeable, it is not enough to say, Would you die? Take away first, the hope of better scenes in this life, the fears of worse in another, and the bodily pain of dying.

The fear of death seems as natural, as the sensation of lust or of hunger: the first & last, for the preservation of the individual; the other for the continuation of the species.

It seems obvious that God, who created the world, intends the happiness and perfection of the system he created. To effect the happiness of the whole, self-love, in its degree, is as requisite as social; for I am myself a part of that whole, as well as another. The difficulty of ascertaining what is virtue, lies in proportioning the degrees of self-love and social. 'Proximus sum egomet mihi.'—'Tunica pallio propior.'—'Charity begins at home.' It is so. It ought to be so; nor is there any inconvenience arises to the public, because it is general. Were this away, the individual must soon perish, and consequently the whole body. A man has every moment occasion to exert his self-love, for the sake of self-preservation; consequently this ought to be stronger, in order to keep him upon his guard. A sentinel's attention should be greater than that of a soldier on a review.

THE social, though alike constant, is not equally intense; because the selfish, being universal, renders the social less essential to the well-being of one's neighbour. In short, the self-love and the social ought to bear such proportion as we find they generally do. If the selfish passion of the rest preponderate, it would be self-destructive in a few individuals to be over-socially disposed. If the social one prevails generally, to be of remarkable selfishness must obstruct the good of society.

WE are oftentime in suspense betwixt the choice of different pursuits. We chuse one at last doubtingly, and with an unconquered hankering after the other. We find the scheme, which we have chosen, answer our expectation but indifferently.—Most worldly projects will. We, therefore, repent of our choice, and immediately fancy happiness in the paths which we decline; and this heightens our uneasiness. We might at least escape the aggravation of it. It is not improbable we had been more unhappy, but extremely probable we had not been less so, had we made a different decision. This, however, relates to schemes that are neither virtuous nor vicious.

HAPPY dogs (says a certain splenetic) our footmen and the populace! Farewell, says Esop, in Vanbrugh, whom I both envy and despise! The servant meets with hundreds whose conversation can amuse him, for one that is the least qualified to be a companion for his master.

'A PERSON cannot eat his cake and have it,' is, as Lord Shaftesbury observes, a proper answer to many

splenetic people. But what imports it to be in the possession of a cake that you do not eat? If then the cake be made to be eaten, says lady L——, better eat it when you are most hungry. Poor woman! she seems to have acted by this maxim, but yet could not avoid crying for the cake she had eaten.

A JUSTICE and his clerk is now little more than a blind man and his dog. The profound ignorance of the former, together with the canine impudence and rapacity of the latter, will but rarely be found wanting to vindicate the comparison. The principal part of the similitude will appear obvious to every one; I mean, that the justice is as much dependent on his clerk for superior insight and implicit guidance, as the blind fellow on his cur that leads him in a string. Add to this, that the offer of a crust will seduce the conductors of either to drag their masters into a kennel.

To remark the different figure made by different persons, under the same circumstances of fortune! Two friends of mine upon a journey had so contrived as to reduce their finances to a single sixpence each. The one, with the genteel and liberal air of abundance, gave his to a black-shoe-boy, who wished his honour a thousand blessings; the other, having lodged a fortnight with a nobleman that was his patron, offered his to the butler, as an instance of his gratitude, who with difficulty forbore to curse him to his face.

A GLASS or two of wine extraordinary only raises a valetudinarian to that warmth of social affection, which had naturally been his lot, in a better state of health.

DEFERENCE is the most complicate, the most indirect, and the most elegant of all compliments.

BE cautious not to consider a person as your superior, merely because he is your superior in the point of assurance. This has often depressed the spirit of a person of desert and diffidence.

WHEN a person, for a splendid servitude, foregoes an humble independency, it may be called an advancement, if you please; but it appears to me an advancement from the pit to the gallery. Liberty is a more invigorating cordial than tokay.

THOUGH punctilios are trifling, they may be as important as the friendship of some persons that regard them—Indeed it is almost an universal practice to rail at punctilio; and it seems in some measure a consequence of our attachment to French fashions. However, it is extremely obvious, that punctilio never caused half the quarrels, that have risen from the freedom of behaviour, which is its opposite extreme. Were all men rational and civilized, the use of ceremony would be superfluous: But as the case is, it at least fixes some bounds to the encroachments of eccentric people, who, under the denomination of freedom, might demand the privilege of breaking your head.

THERE seem near as many people that want passion as want reason.

THE world would be more happy, if persons gave up more time to an intercourse of friendship. But money engrosses all our deference; and we scarce enjoy a

social hour, because we think it unjustly stolen from the main business of our lives.

The state of man is not unlike that of a fish hooked by an angler. Death allows us a little line. We flounce, and sport, and vary our situation: But when we would extend our schemes, we discover our confinement, checked and limited by a superior hand, who drags us from our element whenever he pleases.

How melancholy is it to travel, late and fatigued, upon any ambitious project on a winter's night; & observe the lights of cottages, where all the unambitious people are warm and happy, or at rest in their beds. Some of them, says W——, as wretched as princes, for aught we know to the contrary.

It is possible to discover in some faces the features nature intended, had she not been somehow thwarted in her operations. Is it not easy to remark the same distortion in some minds? There is a phrase pretty frequent among the vulgar, and which they apply to absolute fools.—That they have had a rock too much in their cradles.—With me it is a most expressive idiom to describe a dislocated understanding: an understanding, for instance, which like a watch discovers a multitude of such parts, as appear obviously intended to belong to a system of the greatest perfection; yet which, by some unlucky jumble, falls infinitely short of it.

Is it not the wound our pride sustains by being deceived, that makes us more averse to hypocrites, than to the most audacious and barefaced villain? Yet it seems as much a piece of justice to commend a man for

talking more honestly than he acts, as it is to blame a man for acting more dishonestly than he talks. The sum of the whole, however, is that the one adds to other crimes by his deceit, and the other by his impudence.

There are very few persons who do not lose something of their esteem for you, upon your approach to familiarity.

It happens a little unluckily, that the persons who have the most intimate contempt of money are the same that have the strongest appetites for the pleasures it procures.

We are apt to look for those virtues in the characters of noblemen, that are but rarely to be found any where, except in the preambles to their patents. Some shining exceptions may be made to this rule: In general we may consider their appearance with us in public, as one does our wearing apparel. 'Which lord do you wear to-day? Why I did think to wear my lord ****; but, as there will be little company in the Mall, I will e'en content myself to wear the same noble peer I wore yesterday.'

The worst inconvenience of a small fortune is that it will not admit of inadvertency. Inadvertency, however, ought to be placed at the head of most men's yearly accounts, and a sum as regularly allotted to it as to any other article.

It is with our judgments, as with our eyes. Some can see objects at a greater distance more distinctly, at the same time less distinctly than others the objects that are near them.

Notwithstanding the airs men give themselves, I believe no one sees family to more advantage, than the persons that have no share in it.

How important is the eye to the appearance of an human face! the chief index of temper, understanding, health, & love! What prodigious influence must the same misfortunes have on some persons beyond others! as the loss of an eye to a mere insolent beauty, without the least philosophy to support herself.

The person least reserved in his censure of another's excess in equipage, is commonly the person who would exhibit the same if it had been within his power; the source of both being a disregard to decorum. Likewise he that violently arraigns or fondly indulges it, agree in considering it a little too seriously.

Amid the most mercenary ages, it is but a secondary sort of admiration that is bestowed upon magnificence.

An order of beauties, as of knights, with a style appropriated to them (as for instance, To the Right Beautiful Lady-Such-a-one) would have as good a foundation as any other class, but would, at the same time, be the most invidious of any order that was ever instituted.

A person that is disposed to throw off all reserve before an inferior, should reflect, that he has also his inferiors, to whom he may be equally communicative.

It is impossible for a man of sense to guard against the mortification that may be given him by fools, or heteroclite characters, because he cannot foresee them. A wit-would cannot afford to discard a frivolous

conceit, though it tends to affront you: an old maid, a country put, or a college pedant, will ignorantly or wilfully plunder upon such hints as must discompose you.

Ghosts have no more connexion with darkness, than the mystery of a barber with that of a surgeon; yet we find they go together. Perhaps Nox and Chaos were their mythological parents.

He makes a lady but a poor recompence who marries her, because he has kept her company long after his affection is estranged. Does he not rather encrease the injury?

Second thoughts oftentimes are the very worst of all thoughts. First and third very often coincide. Indeed second thoughts are too frequently formed by the love of novelty, of shewing penetration, of distinguishing ourselves from the mob, and have consequently less of simplicity, and more of affectation. This, however, regards principally objects of taste and fancy. Third thoughts, at least, are here very proper mediators.

'Set a beggar on horseback, and he'll ride,' is a common proverb and a real truth. The 'novus homo' is an 'inexpertus homo,' and consequently must purchase finery, before he knows the emptiness of it experimentally. The established gentleman disregards it, through habit and familiarity.

The foppery of love-verses, when a person is ill and indisposed, is perfect ipecacuanha.

Antiquity of family, & distinctions of gentry, have,

perhaps, less weight in this age, than they had ever heretofore: the bend dexter or sinister; the chief, the canton, or the cheveron, are greatly out of date. The heralds are at length discovered to have no legal authority. Spain, indeed, continues to preserve the distinction, and is poor. France (by their dispute about trading nobility) seems inclined to shake it off. Who now looks with veneration on the ante-diluvian pedigree of a Welchman? Property either is, or is sure to purchase distinction, let the king at arms, or the old maiden aunt, preach as long as either pleases. It is so; perhaps it ought to be so. All honours should lie open, all encouragement be allowed to the members of trade in a trading nation: And as the nobility find it very expedient to partake of their profits, so they, in return, should obtain a share in the others' honours. One would, however, wish the acquisition of learning was as sure a road to dignity, as that of riches.

On Books and Writers

IT is often asserted, by pretenders to singular penetration, that the assistance fancy is supposed to draw from wine, is merely imaginary and chimerical: that all which the poets have urged on this head is absolute rant and enthusiasm; and has no foundation in truth or nature. I am inclined to think otherwise. Judgment, I readily allow, derives no benefit from the noblest cordial. But persons of a phlegmatic constitution have those excellencies often suppressed, of which their imagination is truly capable, by reason of a lentor, which wine may naturally remove. It raises low spirits to a pitch necessary for the exertion of fancy. It confutes the 'Non est tanti,' so frequently a maxim

with speculative persons. It quickens that ambition, or that social bias, which makes a person wish to shine or to please. Ask what tradition says of Mr. Addison's conversation. But instances in point of conversation come within every one's observance. Why then may it not be allowed to produce the same effects in writing.

THERE is nothing so disagreeable in works of humour as an insipid, unsupported, vivacity; the very husks of drollery; bottled small-beer; a man out-riding his horse; lewdness & impotence; a fiery actor in a phlegmatic scene; an illiterate & stupid preacher discoursing upon Urim and Thummim, and beating the pulpit-cushion in such a manner, as though he would make the dust and the truth fly out of it at once.

HUMOUR and Vanbrugh against Wit and Congreve.

THE vacant skull of a pedant generally furnishes out a throne and temple for vanity.

MAY not the custom of scraping when we bow, be derived from the antient custom of throwing their shoes backwards, off their feet?

'A BIRD in the air shall carry the tale, and that which hath wings shall tell the matter.' Such is also the present phrase — 'A little bird told it me' — says nurse—

THE preference which some give to Virgil before Homer is often owing to complexion: some are more formed to enjoy the grand; and others, the beautiful. But as for invention and sublimity, the most shining

qualities of imagination, there is surely no comparison between them.—Yet I enjoy Virgil more.

One reason why the sound is sometimes an echo to the sense, is that the pleasantest objects have often the most harmonious names annexed to them.

Notwithstanding all that Rousseau has advanced so very ingeniously upon plays and players, their profession is, like that of a painter, one of the imitative arts, whose means are pleasure, and whose end is virtue. They both alike, for a subsistence, submit themselves to public opinion: and the dishonour that has attended the last profession, seems not easily accountable.

I have sometimes thought Virgil so remarkably musical, that were his lines read to a musician, wholly ignorant of the language, by a person of capacity to give each word its proper accent, he would not fail to distinguish in it all the graces of harmony.

I think, I can observe a peculiar beauty in the addition of a short syllable, at the end of a blank verse: I mean, however, in blank dialogue. In other poetry it is as sure to flatten; which may be discerned in Prior's translation of Callimachus, viz.—'the holy victĭm—Dictæan, hearst thŏu—Birth, Great Rheă—Inferior Reptĭle—' &c., &c., for the translation abounds with them; and is rendered by that means prosaic.

But in dialogue, the language ought never to leave nature the least out of sight; and especially where pity is to be produced, it appears to receive an advantage from the melancholy flow this syllable occasions. Let me produce a few instances from Otway's Tragedy

of the Unhappy Marriage; and, in order to form a judgment, let the reader substitute a word of equal import, but of a syllable less, in the place of the instances I produce. (Some instances are numberless where they familiarize and give an ease to dialogue.)

—'Sure my ill fate's upon mĕ.'

—'Why was I not laid in my peaceful grave,
With my poor parents, and at rest as they ăre?'

—'I never see you now—you have been kindĕr.'

—'Why was I made with all my sex's softnĕss,
Yet want the cunning to conceal it's folliĕs?
I'll see Castalio—tax him with his falshood,'

—'Should you charge rough,
I should but weep, and answer you with sobbĭng.'

—'When thou art from me, every place is desĕrt.'

—'Surely Paradise is round me,
And every sense is full of thy perfection.
To hear thee speak might calm a madman's frenzy,
'Till by attention, he forgot his sorrows.'

—' 'Till good men wish him dead—or I offend hĭm.'

—'And hang upon you, like a drowning creature.'

—'Cropt this fair rose, and rifled all its sweetness.'

—'Give me Chamont, and let the world forsake mĕ.'

—'I've drank an healing draught
For all my cares, and never more shall wrong thĕe.'

—'When I'm laid low in the cold grave forgotten,
May you be happy in a fairer bride,
But none can ever love you, like Monimia.'

I SHOULD imagine, that, in some or most of these examples, a particular degree of tenderness is owing to

the supernumerary syllable; yet it requires a nice ear for the disposition of it (for it must not be universal); and, with this, may give at once an harmonious flow, a natural ease, an energy, tenderness, & variety to the language.

A MAN of dry sound judgment attends to the truth of the proposition;—a man of ear and sensibility, to the music of the versification:—a man of a well-regulated taste finds the former more deeply imprinted on him, by the judicious management of the latter.

IT seems to me, that what are called notes at the bottom of pages (as well as parentheses in writing) might be generally avoided, without injuring the thread of a discourse. It is true, it might require some address to interweave them gracefully into the text; but how much more agreeable would be the effect, than to interrupt the reader by such frequent avocations? How much more graceful to play a tune upon one set of keys, with varied stops, than to seek the same variety, by an awkward motion from one set to another.

THE ordinary letters from friend to friend seem capable of receiving a better turn, than mere compliment, frivolous intelligence, or professions of friendship continually repeated. The established maxim to correspond with ease, has almost excluded every useful subject. But may not excess of negligence discover affectation, as well as its opposite extreme? There are many degrees of intermediate solidity betwixt a Westphalia ham and a whipt syllabub.

I AM astonished to remark the defect of ear, which some tolerably harmonious poets discover in their

Alexandrines. It seems wonderful that an error so obvious, and so very disgustful to a nice ear, should occur so frequently as the following:

'What seraph e'er could preach
So choice a lecture as his wondrous virtue's lore?'

The pause being after the sixth syllable, it is plain the whole emphasis of pronunciation is thrown upon the particle AS. It seems most amazing to me, that this should be so common a blunder.

'SIMPLEX munditiis*' has been esteemed universally to be a phrase at once very expressive, and of very difficult interpretation: at least, not very capable to be explained without circumlocution. What objection can we make to that single word 'elegant,' which excludes the glare and multiplicity of ornaments on one side, as much as it does dirt and rusticity on the other?

THE French use the word 'naïve' in such a sense as to be explained by no English word; unless we will submit to restrain ourselves in the application of the word 'sentimental.' It means the language of passion or the heart, in opposition to the language of reflexion and the head.

THE amiable and the severe, Mr. Burke's sublime and beautiful, by different proportions, are mixed in every character. Accordingly, as either is predominant, men imprint the passions of love or fear. The best punch depends on a proper mixture of sugar and lemon.

*Dr. Lancaster being asked hastily his idea of this expression, answered, *Quakerly*.

THERE are many persons acquire to themselves a character of insincerity, from what is in truth mere inconstancy. And there are persons of warm, but changeable passions; perhaps the sincerest of any in the very instant they make profession, but the very least to be depended on through the short duration of all extremes. It has often puzzled me, on this account, to ascertain the character of lady Luxborough*; yet whatever were her principles, I esteem lord Bolingbroke's to have been the same. She seemed in all respects the female lord Bolingbroke.

The common people call wit, mirth; and fancy, folly; fanciful & folliful, they use indiscriminately. It seems to flow from hence, that they consider money as of more importance, than the persons who possess it; and that no conduct is wise, beside what has a tendency to enrich us.

One should not destroy an insect, one should not quarrel with a dog, without a reason sufficient to vindicate one through all the courts of morality.

The trouble occasioned by want of a servant, is so much less than the plague of a bad one, as it is less painful to clean a pair of shoes than undergo an excess of anger.

The fund of sensible discourse is limited; that of jest and badinerie is infinite. In many companies then, where nothing is to be learnt, it were, perhaps, better

*Sister to lord Bolingbroke; with her the author had enjoyed a literary correspondence.

to get upon the familiar footing; to give and take in the way of raillery.

When a wife or mistress lives as in a jail, the person that confines her lives the life of a jailor.

There seems some analogy betwixt a person's manner in every action of his life.

To consume one's time and fortune at once, without pleasure, recompence, or figure, is like pouring forth one's spirits rather in phlebotomy than enjoyment.

Parents are generally partial to great vivacity in their children, and are apt to be more or less fond of them in proportion to it. Perhaps there cannot be a symptom less expressive of future judgment and solidity. It seems thoroughly to preclude not only depth of penetration, but also delicacy of sentiment. Neither does it seem any way consistent with a sensibility of pleasure, notwithstanding all external appearances. It is a mere greyhound puppy in a warren, that runs at all truths, and at all sorts of pleasure; but does not allow itself time to be successful in securing any. It is a busy bee, whose whole time passes away in mere flight from flower to flower; without resting upon any a sufficient time to gather honey.

The Queen of Sweden declared, 'she did not love men as men; but merely because they were not women.' What a spirited piece of satire!

In mixed conversation, or amongst persons of no great knowledge, one indulges one's self in discourse that is neither ingenious nor significant. Vapid frivolous

chit-chat serves to pass away the time. But corked up again in retirement, we recover our wonted strength, spirit, and flavour.

THE regard, men externally profess for their superiors, is oftentimes rewarded—in the manner it deserves.

SHINING characters are not always the most agreeable ones. The mild radiance of an emerald is by no means less pleasing than the glare of a ruby.

MANKIND suffers more by the conflict of contrary passions, than that of passion and reason: yet, perhaps, the truest way to quench one passion is to kindle up another.

PRUDENT men should lock up their motives, giving only their intimates a key.

THE best time to frame an answer to the letters of a friend, is the moment you receive them. Then the warmth of friendship, and the intelligence received, most forcibly co-operate.

PEOPLE of real genius have strong passions; people of strong passions have great partialities: such as Mr. Pope for Lord Bolingbroke, &c. Persons of slow parts have languid passions, and persons of languid passions have little partiality. They neither love, nor hate, nor look, nor move, with the energy of a man of sense. The faults of the former should be balanced with their excellencies; and the blamelessness of the latter should be weighed with their insignificancy. Happiness and virtue are, perhaps, generally dispensed with more equality than we are aware.

EXTREME volatile and sprightly tempers seem inconsistent with any great enjoyment. There is too much time wasted in the mere transition from one object to another. No room for those deep impressions, which are made alone by the duration of an idea; and are quite requisite to any strong sensation, either of pleasure or of pain. The bee to collect honey, or the spider to gather poison, must abide some time upon the weed or flower. They whose fluids are mere sal volatile, seem rather chearful than happy men. The temper above described is oftener the lot of wits, than of persons of great abilities.

THERE are no persons more solicitous about the preservation of rank, than those who have no rank at all. Observe the humours of a country christening; and you will find no court in Christendom so ceremonious as the quality of Brentford.

TREES afford us the advantage of shade in summer, as well as fuel in winter; as the same virtue allays the fervor of intemperate passions in our youth, and serves to comfort and keep us warm amid the rigours of old age.

THE term Indecision, in a man's character, implies an idea very nicely different from that of Irresolution; yet it has a tendency to produce it; and, like that, has often its original in excessive delicacy and refinement.

EFFEMINACY of appearance, & an excessive attention to the minuter parts of dress, is, I believe, properly, in the general run, esteemed a symptom of irresolution. But, yet, instances are seen to abound in the French nation to the contrary. And in our own, that of lord

Mark Kerr was an instance equal to a thousand. A snuff-box hinge, rendered invisible, was an object on which his happiness appeared to turn; which, however, might be clouded by a speck of dirt, or wounded by a hole in the heel of his stocking. Yet this man's intrepidity was shewn beyond all contradiction. What shall we say then of Mr. Gray, of manners very delicate, yet possessed of a poetical vein fraught with the noblest and sublimest images, and of a mind remarkably well stored with the more masculine parts of learning?—Here, perhaps, we must remain in suspense—For though taste does not imply manners, so neither does it preclude them: or what hinders, that a man should feel that same delicacy in regard to real honour, which he does in regard to dress?

If beneficence be not in a person's will, what imports it to mankind, that it is ever so much in his power? And yet we see how much more regard is generally paid to a worthless man of fortune, than to the most benevolent beggar that ever uttered an ineffectual blessing. It is all agreeable to Mr. Burke's thesis, that the formidable idea of power affects more deeply than the most beautiful image we can conceive of moral virtue.

King James the First, willing to involve the regal power in mystery, that, like natural objects, it might appear greater through the fog, declared it presumption for a subject to say, 'what a king might do in the fullness of his power.'—This was absurd; but it seems presumption in a man of the world, to say what means a man of genius may think instrumental to his happiness. W—— used to say, it was presumption for him to make conjectures on the occasion. A person of refinement seems to have his pleasures distinct from the

common run of men: what the world calls important, is to him wholly frivolous; & what the world esteems frivolous, seems essential to his tranquillity.

THE apparatus of a funeral among the middle rank of people, and sometimes among the great, has one effect that is not frivolous. It in some measure dissipates and draws off the attention from the main object of concern. Weaker minds find a sort of relief in being compelled to give directions about the manner of interment: & the grave solemnity of the hearse, plumes, and escutcheons, though they add to the force of the terror, diminish that of simple grief.

THERE are some people whom you cannot regard though they seem desirous to oblige you; nay, even though they do you actual services. This is the case wherever their sentiments are too widely different from your own. Thus a person truly avaricious can never make himself truly agreeable to one enamoured with the arts & sciences. A person of exquisite sensibility and tenderness can never be truly pleased with another of no feelings; who can see the most intimate of his friends or kindred expire without any greater pain than if he beheld a pitcher broken. These, properly speaking, can be said to feel nothing but the point of a sword; and one could more easily pardon them, if this apathy were the effect of philosophy, and not want of thought. But what I would inculcate is, with tempers thus different one should never attempt any close connexion.

'Lupis & agnis quanta fortito obtigit,
Tecum mihi discordia est.*'

*TRANSLATION.—

As much as lambs and wolves can disagree,
Ev'n such unlikeness grows 'twixt me and thee.

Yet it may be a point of prudence to shew them civility, and allow a toleration to their various propensities. To converse much with them would not only be painful, but tend to injure your own disposition: and to aim at obtaining their applause, would only make your character inconsistent.

THERE are some people who find a gloomy kind of pleasure in glouting, which could hardly be encreased by the satisfaction of having their wishes granted. This is, seemingly, a bad character, and yet often connected with a sense of honour, of conscious merit, with warm gratitude, great sincerity, and many other valuable qualities.

THERE is a degree of understanding in women, with which one not only ought to be contented, but absolutely pleased.—One would not, in them, require the unfathomable abyss.

THE worst consequence of gratifying our passions, in regard to objects of an indifferent nature, is, that it causes them to proceed with greater violence towards other and other objects; and so ad infinitum. I wish, for my pocket, an elegant etui; and gold to remove the pain of wishing, and partake the pleasure of enjoyment. I would part with the purchace-money, for which I have less regard; but the gratification of this wish would generate fifty others, that would be ruinous. See Epictetus; who, therefore, advises to resist the first.

VIRTUE and agreeableness are, I fear, too often separated; that is, externals affect and captivate the fancy, where internal worth is wanting, to engage & attach

one's reason—A most perplexing circumstance; and no where more remarkable, than when we see a wise man totally enslaved by the beauty of a person he despises.

I KNOW not whether encreasing years do not cause one to esteem fewer people, and to bear with more.

I THINK, I never knew an instance of great quickness of parts being joined with great solidity. The most rapid rivers are seldom or never deep.

TO be at once a rake, and to glory in the character, discovers at the same time a bad disposition and a bad taste.

THERE are persons who slide insensibly into an habit of contradiction. Their first endeavour, upon hearing aught asserted, is to discover wherein it may be plausibly disputed. This, they imagine, gives an air of great sagacity; and if they can mingle a jest with contradiction, think they display great superiority. One should be cautious against the advances of this kind of prosperity, which loses us friends, in a matter generally of no consequence.

AN income for life only seems the best calculated for the circumstances and situation of mortal man: the farther property in an estate encreases the difficulty of disengaging our affections from this world, and of thinking in the manner we ought to think of a system from which we must be entirely separated:

'I trust that sinking fund, my life.'—POPE.

SURPRIZE quickens enjoyment, & expectation banishes

surprize; this is the simple reason, why few pleasures, that have engrossed our attention previously, ever answer our ideas of them. Add to this, that imagination is a great magnifier, and causes the hopes we conceive to grow too large for their object—Thus expectation does not only destroy the advantage of surprize, and so flattens pleasure; but makes us hope for an imaginary addition, which gives the pain of disappointment.

On Religion

PERHAPS, we should not pray to God 'to keep us stedfast in any faith;' but conditionally, that it be a right one.

When a tree is falling, I have seen the labourers, by a trivial jerk with a rope, throw it upon the spot where they would wish it should lie. Divines, understanding this text too literally, pretend, by a little interposition in the article of death, to regulate a person's everlasting happiness. I fancy, the allusion will hardly countenance their presumption.

When misfortunes happen to such as dissent from us in matters of religion, we call them judgments: when to those of our own sect, we call them trials: when to persons neither way distinguished, we are content to impute them to the settled course of things.

It is a common argument amongst divines, in the behalf of a religious life, that a contrary behaviour has such consequences when we come to die. It is indeed true, but seems an argument of a subordinate kind:

the article of death is more frequently of short duration. Is it not a stronger persuasive, that virtue makes us happy daily, and removes the fear of death from our lives antecedently, than that it smooths the pillow of a death-bed?

It is a question whether the remaining superstitions among the vulgar of the English nation ought wholly to be removed: The notion of a ghost's appearance for the discovery of murder, or any flagrant act of injustice; 'that what is got over the devil's back will be spent under his belly;' 'that cards are the devil's books,' &c.

If there be numbers of people that murder and devour their species that have contradictory notions of beauty; that have deemed it meritorious to offer up human sacrifices; to leave their parents in deserts of wild beasts; to expose their offspring as soon as born, &c. &c. there should seem to be no universal moral sense; and of consequence, none.

It is not now, 'We have seen his star in the east,' but 'We have seen the star on his breast, and are come to worship him.'

It is said, and I believe justly enough, that crimes appear less heinous to a person that is about committing them, than to his conscience afterwards. Is then the crime to be imputed to him in the degree he foresaw it, or in that he reflects upon it? perhaps the one and the other may incline towards an extreme.

The word 'Religio' amongst the Romans, and the word 'Church' among the Christians, seem to have

more interpretations than almost any other. 'Malus procidit, eâ religione moti.' Livy, p. 1150. vol. II. Here religion seems to mean prodigy—'Si quis tale sacrum solenne duceret, nec se sine religione & piaculo id omittere posse.' Livy, 1157. Here it seemingly means impiety: 'Piaculum' being such an offence as required expiatory sacrifices.

'Tantum religio potuit suadere malorum.'

Here it means superstition, as it does often in Lucretius.

THE pope's wanton excommunications; his capricious pardon of sins; his enormous indulgences, & other particulars of like nature, shew that (whatever religions may practise cruelty) it is peculiarly the church that makes a jest of God Almighty.

THE word Church has these different senses:

1. A set of people ordained to assist at divine service.

2. The members of a certain religious profession, including clergy and laity.

3. A large piece of building, dedicated to the service of God, and furnished with proper conveniences for those who meet to worship him.

4. A body of people, who too frequently harass and infest the laity according to law, and who conceal their real names under that of a spiritual court.

How ready have all nations been, after having allowed a proper portion of laud and praise to their own abilities, to attribute their success in war to the peculiar favour of a just Providence! Perhaps this construction, as it is often applied, argues more of presumption

than gratitude. In the first place, such is the partiality of the human heart, that, perhaps, two hostile nations may alike rely upon the justice of their cause; and which of the two has the better claim to it, none but Providence can itself discover. In the next, it should be observed, that success by no means demonstrates justice. Again, we must not wholly forget to consider, that success may be no more than a means of destruction. And lastly, supposing success to be really and absolutely good, do we find that individuals are always favoured with it in proportion to their desert; and if not individuals, why must we then suppose it to be the uniform recompence of society?

How happy may a lord bishop render a peasant at the hour of death, by bestowing on him his blessing, and giving him assurance of salvation! It is the same with regard to religious opinions in general. They may be confirmed and established to their hearts content, because they assent implicitly to the opinions of men who, they think, should know. A person of distinguished parts and learning has no such advantages; friendless, wavering, solitary, and, through his very situation, incapable of much assistance: If the rustic's tenor of behaviour approach nearer to the brutes, he also appears to approach nearer to their happiness.

You pray for happiness—Consider the situation or disposition of your mind at the time, and you will find it naturally tends to produce it.

In travelling, one contrives to allow day-light for the worst part of the road. But in life, how hard is it, that every unhappiness seems united towards the close of our journey! pain, fatigue, and want of spirits; when

spirits are more immediately necessary to our support! of which nothing can supply the place beside religion and philosophy! But then the foundation must be laid in meditation and enquiry, at an unmolested season, when our faculties are strong and vigorous; or the tempest will most probably throw down the superstructure.

Conscience is adscititious; I mean influenced by conviction, which may be well or ill grounded; therefore no certain test of truth: but at most times a very faithful and a very prudent admonitor.

The attraction of bodies and social affection of minds seem in many respects analogous.

Attractions of either kind are less perspicuous, & less perceptible, through a variety of counter-attractions that diminish their effect. Were two persons to meet in Ispahan, though quite strangers to each other here, would they not go near to feel a kind of friendship on the single score of their being Englishmen? would they not pass a chearful evening together over rice and sherbett?—In like manner, suppose two or three cotemporaries only, to meet on the surface of the globe, amid myriads of persons of all other ages whatsoever, would they not discover a mutual tenderness, even though they had been enemies when living. What then remains, but that we revive the memory of such relations now, in order to quicken our benevolence? that we are all countrymen, is a consideration that is more commonly inculcated, and limits our benevolence to a smaller number also. That we are cotemporaries, and persons whom future history shall unite, who, great part of us, however imperceptibly, receive

and confer reciprocal benefits; this, with every other circumstance that tends to heighten our philanthropy, should be brought to mind as much as possible, during our abode upon earth. Hereafter it may be just, and requisite, to comprehend all ages of mankind.

On Taste

DIVIDING the world into an hundred parts, I am apt to believe the calculation might be thus adjusted:

Pedants	15
Persons of common sense	40
Wits	15
Fools	15
Persons of a wild uncultivated taste	10
Persons of original taste, improved by art	5

Habit, herein, seems to have an influence to which we can affix no bounds. Suppose the generality of mankind formed with a mouth from ear to ear, and that it were requisite in point of respiration, would not the present make of mouths, have subjected a man to the name of Bocha chica?

I know not, if one reason of the different opinions concerning beauty be not owing to self-love. People are apt to form some criterion from their own persons, or possessions. A tall person approves the look of a folio or octavo: a square thick-set man is more delighted with a quarto. This instance, at least, may serve to explain what I intend.

Taste produces different effects upon different complexions. It consists, as I have often observed, in the

appetite and the discernment; then most properly so called, when they are united in equal proportions.

Where the discernment is predominant, a person is pleased with fewer objects, and requires perfection in what he sees. Where the appetite prevails, he is so much attached to beauty, that he feels a gratification in every degree in which it is manifested. I frankly own myself to be of this latter class: I love painting and statuary so well, as to be not undelighted with moderate performances.

There seems a pretty exact analogy between the objects and the senses. Some tunes, some tastes, some visible objects, please at first, and that only; others only by degrees, and then long (Raspberry-jelly—Green-tea—Alley-Croaker — Air in Ariadne — a Baron's Robe—and a Bishop's Lawn). Perhaps, some of these instances may be ill enough chosen, but the thing is true.

To how very great a degree the appearance of health alone is beauty, I am not able to determine. I presume the most regular and well-proportioned form of limbs and features is at the same time the most healthful one: the fittest to perform the functions & operations of the body. If so, a perfectly healthful form is a perfectly beautiful form—Health is beauty, and the most perfect health is the most perfect beauty. To have recourse to experience: the most sickly & cadaverous countenance is the least provocative to love; or rather the most inconsistent with it. A florid look, to appear beautiful, must be the bloom of health, and not the glow of a fever.

An obvious connexion may be traced betwixt moral and physical beauty; the love of symmetry and the love of virtue; an elegant taste and perfect honesty. We may, we must, rise from the love of natural, to that of moral beauty: such is the conclusion of Plato, and of my Lord Shaftesbury.

Wherever there is a want of taste, we generally observe a love of money, and cunning: and whenever taste prevails, a want of prudence, and an utter disregard to money.

Taste (or a just relish of beauty) seems to distinguish us from the brute creation, as much as intellect, or reason. We do not find that brutes have any sensation of this sort. A bull is goaded by the love of sex in general, without the least appearance of any distinction in favour of the more beautiful individual. Accordingly men devoid of taste are in a great measure indifferent as to make, complexion, feature; and find a difference of sex sufficient to excite their passion in all its fervour. It is not thus where there is a taste for beauty, either accurate or erroneous. The person of a good taste requires real beauty in the object of his passion; and the person of bad taste requires something which he substitutes in the place of beauty.

Persons of taste, it has been asserted, are also the best qualified to distinguish, and the most prone to admire moral virtue: nor does it invalidate this maxim, that their practice does not correspond. The power of acting virtuously depends in a great measure upon withstanding a present, and perhaps sensual, gratification, for the sake of a more distant and intellectual satisfaction. Now, as persons of fine taste are men of the

strongest sensual appetites, it happens that in balancing present and future, they are apt enough to allow an unreasonable advantage to the former. On the other hand, a more phlegmatic character may, with no greater self-denial, allow the future fairer play. But let wave the merely sensual indulgences; and let us consider the man of taste in regard to points of meum and tuum; in regard to the virtues of forgiveness; in regard to charity, compassion, munificence, and magnanimity; and we cannot fail to vote his taste the glorious triumph which it deserves.

THERE is a kind of counter-taste, founded on surprize and curiosity, which maintains a sort of rivalship with the true; & may be expressed by the name Concetto. Such is the fondness of some persons for a knife-haft made from the royal oak, or a tobacco-stopper from a mulberry-tree of Shakespear's own planting. It gratifies an empty curiosity. Such is the casual resemblance of Apollo and the nine Muses in a piece of agate; a dog expressed in feathers, or a wood-cock in mohair. They serve to give surprize. But a just fancy will no more esteem a picture because it proves to be produced by shells, than a writer would prefer a pen because a person made it with his toes. In all such cases, difficulty should not be allowed to give a casting weight; nor a needle be considered as a painter's instrument, when he is so much better furnished with a pencil*.

*Cornelius Ketel, born at Gonda in 1548; landed in England 1573; settled at Amsterdam 1581; took it into his head to grow famous by painting with his fingers instead of pencils.—The whim took—His success increased—His fingers appearing too easy tools, he then undertook to paint with his feet.—See H. Walpole's Book of Painters.

Perhaps no print, or even painting, is capable of producing a figure answerable to the idea which poetry or history has given us of great men: a Cicero, for instance, an Homer, a Cato, or an Alexander. The same, perhaps, is true of the grandeur of some antient buildings—And the reason is, that the effects of a pencil are distinct and limited, whereas the descriptions of the pen leave the imagination room to expatiate; and Burke has made it extremely obvious, that indistinctness of out-line is one source of the sublime.

What an absurdity is it, in the framing even prints, to suffer a margin of white paper to appear beyond the ground; destroying half the relievo the lights are intended to produce! Frames ought to contrast with paintings; or to appear as distinct as possible: for which reason, frames of wood inlaid, or otherwise variegated with colours, are less suitable than gilt ones, which, exhibiting an appearance of metal, afford the best contrast with colour.

There is, perhaps, a sublime, and a beautiful, in the very make of a face, exclusive of any particular expression of the soul; or, at least, not expressive of any other than a tame dispassionate one. We see often what the world calls regular features, and a good complexion, almost totally unanimated by any discovery of the temper or understanding. Whenever the regularity of feature, beauty of complexion, the strong expression of sagacity & generosity, concur in one face, the features are irresistible.

But even here it is to be observed, that a sort of sympathy has a prodigious bias—Thus a pensive beauty, with regular features and complexion, will have the

preference with a spectator of the pensive cast; and so of the rest.

The soul appears to me to discover herself most in the mouth and eyes; with this difference, that the mouth seems the more expressive of the temper, and the eye of the understanding.

It is evident enough to me, that persons often occur, who may be said to have an ear to music, and an eye for proportions in visible objects, who nevertheless can hardly be said to have a relish or taste for either. I mean, that a person may distinguish notes and tones to a nicety, and yet not give a discerning choice to what is preferable in music. The same, in objects of sight.

On the other hand, they cannot have a proper feeling of beauty or harmony, without a power of discriminating those notes and proportions on which harmony and beauty so fully depend.

What is said, in a treatise lately published, for beauty's being more common than deformity (and seemingly with excellent reason,) may be also said for virtue's being more common than vice.

Quere, Whether beauty does not as much require an opposition of lines, as it does an harmony of colours?

The passion for antiquity, as such, seems in some measure opposite to the taste for beauty or perfection. It is rather the foible of a lazy and pusillanimous disposition, looking back and resting with pleasure on the steps by which we have arrived thus far, than the bold

and enterprizing spirit of a genius, whose ambition fires him only to reach the goal. Such as is described (on another occasion) in the zealous and active charioteer of Horace;

'—hunc atque hunc superare laboret.
Instat equis auriga suos vincentibus; illum
Præteritum temnens extremos inter euntem*.'

Again, the

'Nil actum reputans, si quid restaret agendum†,'

is the least applicable, of any character, to a mere antiquarian; who, instead of endeavouring to improve or to excel, contents himself, perhaps, with discovering the very name of a first inventor; or with tracing back an art that is flourishing, to the very first source of its original deformity.

I have heard it claimed by adepts in music, that the pleasure it imparts to a natural ear, which owes little or nothing to cultivation, is by no means to be compared to what they feel themselves from the most perfect composition—The state of the question may be best explained by a recourse to objects that are analogous —Is a country-fellow less struck with beauty than a philosopher or an anatomist, who knows how that beauty is produced? Surely no. On the other hand, an attention to the cause may somewhat interfere

*Imitation.—
The charioteer, ambitious to obtain
The victor-palm, along the burning plain
Urges his course, yields all the loosen'd rein;
Now this, now that, outgoes in frantic haste,
Envies the foremost steeds, despises those he pass'd.

†Translation.—
Esteeming nothing done, if aught remain'd to do.

with the attention to the effect—They may, indeed, feel a pleasure of another sort—The faculty of reason may obtain some kind of balance, for what the more sensible faculty of the imagination loses.

I AM much inclined to suppose our ideas of beauty depend greatly upon habit—what I mean is, upon the familiarity with objects which we happen to have seen since we came into the world—Our taste for uniformity, from what we have observed in the individual parts of nature, a man, a tree, a beast, a bird, or insect, &c.—Our taste for regularity from what is within our power to observe in the several perfections of the whole system.

A LANDSKIP, for instance, is always irregular, and to use regularity in painting, or gardening, would make our work unnatural and disagreeable. Thus we allow beauty to the different, and almost opposite proportions of all animals.

OUR taste of beauty is, perhaps, compounded of all the ideas that have entered the imagination from our birth. This seems to occasion the different opinions that prevail concerning it. For instance, a foreign eye esteems those features & dresses handsome, which we think deformed.

THE beauty of most objects is partly of the absolute and partly of the relative kind. A Corinthian pillar has some beauty dependent on its variety and smoothness: which I would call absolute; it has also a relative beauty, dependent on its taperness and foliage; which, authors say, was first copied from the leaves of plants, and the shape of a tree.

Uniformity should, perhaps, be added as another source of absolute beauty (when it appears in one single object.) I do not know any other reason, but that it renders the whole more easily comprehended. It seems that nature herself considers it as beauty, as the external parts of the human frame are made uniform to please the sight; which is rarely the case of the internal, that are not seen.

Hutchinson determines absolute beauty to depend on this, and on variety; and says it is in a compound ratio of both. Thus an octagon excels a square; and a square, a figure of unequal sides; but carry variety to an extreme, and it loses its effect. For instance, multiply the number of angles till the mind loses the uniformity of parts, and the figure is less pleasing; or, as it approaches nearer to a round, it may be said to be robbed of its variety.

But, amidst all these eulogiums of variety, it is proper to observe, that novelty sometimes requires a little abatement. I mean that some degree of familiarity introduces a discovery of relative beauty, more than adequate to the bloom of novelty.—This is, now and then, obvious in the features of a face, the air of some tunes, and the flavour of some dishes. In short, it requires some familiarity to become acquainted with the relation that parts bear unto the whole, or one object to another.

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